No. 2 May 1983

IMAGINE™

Adventure Games Magazine

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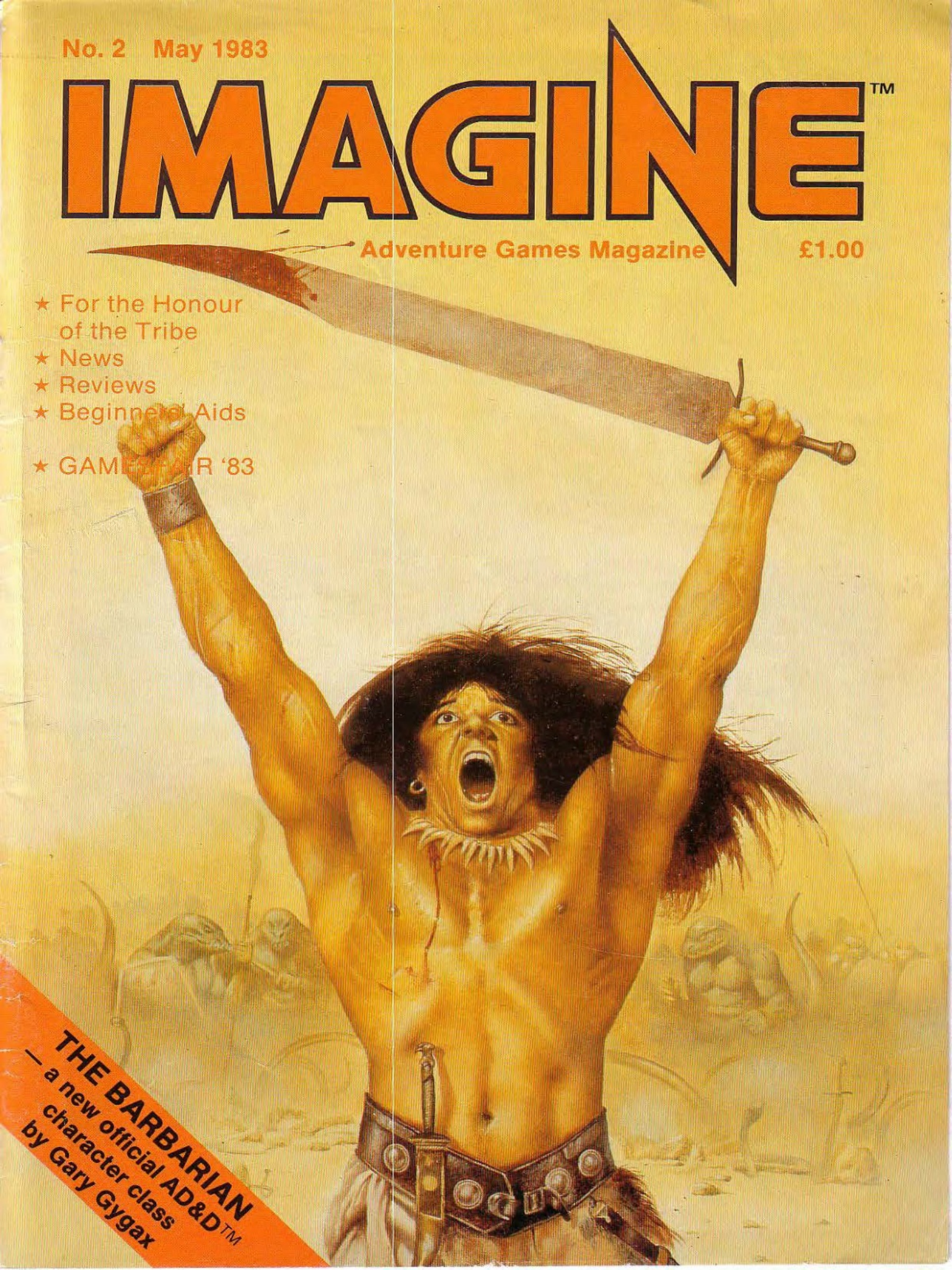

THE BARBARIAN
— a new official AD&D™ character class
by Gary Gygax

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Editorial

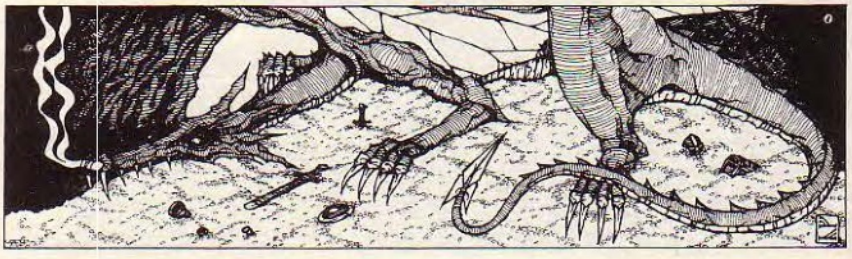
The great thing about role-playing games is that they are developing, growing entities. Very few boardgames offer any adaptation or change once published, save where errors or omissions have been made. In those sports where changes are regularly made to the rules, the motivation is usually to correct or commence some new emphasis in the manner in which the game is played, as with the introduction of fielding circles on limited over cricket, or with the altering of the points value of a try in rugby union.

No-one in this industry is going to pretend that some of the changes made to role-playing games systems were not due to unforeseen problems high-lighted by time. However, when you add together all the material that has appeared in DRAGON™ magazine, other commercial publications and fanzines, there has been an enormous outpouring of talent, developing the games far beyond the original bounds. To an extent, all these additions and alterations have become for a while at least, acceptable, since someone, somewhere, has accepted the change as house rules.

An important point needs to be made here. Gary Gygax, President of TSR Inc. in the USA, has gone on record in the past setting out his position on the question of 'official' and non-sanctioned changes. In his view, any house rules that alter the technical aspects of the way an AD&D™ game is played mean that the game being played is no longer the AD&D game. The only alterations that count are those tagged 'official' by TSR — these would be the only permissible 'house rules' at a TSR games event, like a GEN CON® convention or GamesFair.

So rather than just follow the trend of publishing new monsters, weapons, and other items just for their own sake, IMAGINE™ magazine will be bringing you the work of many talented writers, who will be trying to add more pleasure to your gaming. And in this issue, that aim is fulfilled with an official addition to the AD&D rules, penned in this instance by Gary himself.

The Barbarian is the most important addition to that games system since the release of the FIEND FOLIO® Tome. In this issue, not only do we bring you this new character class, but also we offer a mini-module specifically designed for use with it. We hope you enjoy both.



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CONTRIBUTORS

Some of the contributors in this issue of IMAGINE™ magazine need no introduction to regular role-players. Gary Gygax could be described as the father of adventure role-playing games, having invented the D&D® and AD&D™ games systems. He is now President of TSR Inc. in the USA. The barbarian character class marks the first part of a large-scale expansion of the AD&D game. Other new official additions will be featured in this magazine in coming months.

The author of the module in this issue is Graeme Morris, who also edits the PA newsletter pages in this magazine. His connections with the game go back to his days at Cambridge University (well, it beats spying...), and he designed the modules for the AD&D team competitions at the GamesFairs of 1981-3.

Roger Musson has had work published frequently in *White Dwarf* and *PAN*, but his most notorious contribution to role-playing games must be the Nilbog, a monster which appeared in the FIEND FOLIO™ tome. It is said to be a goblin affected by spatio-temporal inversion, which gains hit points when it is struck, and can only be hurt by casting **cure light wounds** or somesuch upon it...

Pete Tamlyn will be writing a regular column bringing you a personal look at the events and personalities of the gaming world. His claim to fame comes from the *Acolyte*, the fanzine that he has edited for the last 4 years. While this 'zine concentrates on the postal side of the hobby, Pete has acted as DM at GamesFair, and attends other RPG gatherings throughout the year.

FORTHCOMING FEATURES

In issue 3 of IMAGINE™ magazine .....

★ **What's the Difference?** The answer to the most often asked question about the D&D and AD&D games! Noel Williams looks at the two most popular FRP systems in the world.

★ **A Box for the Margrave.** This mini-module ties in closely with Noel's article to illustrate some of the points he raises.

★ **Too Good To Be**, by Dave Langford. Original fiction from an increasingly popular author.

..... and in later issues

★ **A prize competition!** Solve the mystery of the pictures and you could win £40-worth of goodies from TSR's range of games. *The competition commences in issue 4.*

★ **Cinderella Switch**, by Anne McCaffrey. The first UK publication of this short story from the author who brought you the Dragonriders of Pern. *Appearing in issue 4.*

★ A regular feature on computer gaming. *Beginning in issue 5.*

THE BEGINNERS' GUIDE

'Sword in hand, Brumhold kicked in the door. He nodded in satisfaction as it thudded into the wall. Across the room he faced six goblins, their evil eyes glowed red in the flickering torchlight. A half smile crossed his scarred face at the thought of action. By his side stood Jolinda, a warrior priestess, ready to deal death to the Spawn of Chaos.

Lemmy, a thief by trade, hung back by the door. Not for her the risk of death on the end of a goblin spear, there were easier ways to get rich. She tried to keep watch on both the corridor and the room and stood prepared for flight if anything went wrong.

Brumhold cursed as his sword swung harmlessly over the head of the ducking goblin. Another goblin reeled back, limbs flailing, under the impact of the cleric's mace.

With a cry of arcane words and mystical passes, Sarak unleashed his power. That instant the battle was over. The goblins' eyes gazed as they fell to the floor asleep.

Relieved by the outcome, Lemmy stepped towards the goblins only to be stopped halfway by Brumhold. A brief argument ensued, but Lemmy and Jolinda's cold logic won out over Brumhold's code of honour — the goblins were swiftly despatched. A search revealed a wooden chest, a few silver coins and a key. With a grin Lemmy placed the key in the lock....'

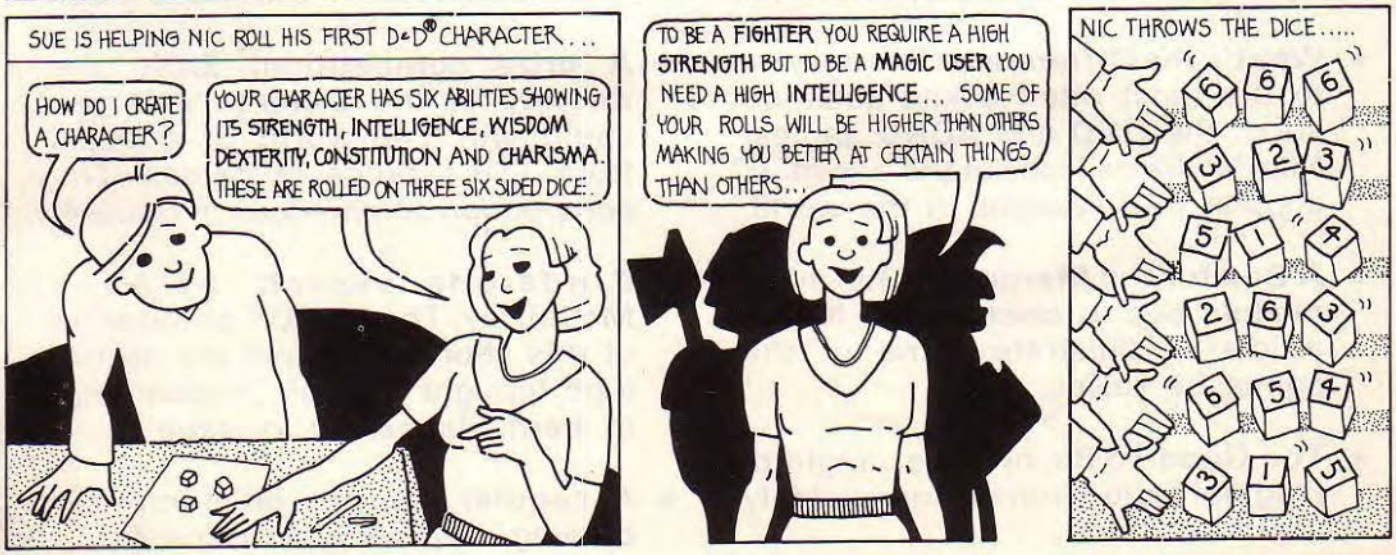
Fantasy literature abounds with such tales — but the deeds of brave warriors, devout clerics, arcane spell casters and cunning thieves are not restricted to the novel. The players of fantasy role-playing games can participate in many different adventures, experiencing the thrill of exploration and combat.

This adventure took place during such a game. Sue, the referee or Dungeon Master, has created the setting and runs the game acording to the rules. The other players each take the role of a fictional figure, like an actor taking on the part of a character in a play. Jon is playing a fighter; Anne, a cleric; Terry, a thief; and Alan, a magic user. In the dungeon, the players have just approached a large wooden door. Terry's thief listened at the door but failed to hear anything.

Jon — 'I'll kick in the door.'

Jon's fighter has a high strength increasing his chance of opening the door. Sue secretly rolls a dice and the throw is sufficient to open the door. She now quickly checks her room description to see what the room contains.

THE ADVENTURES OF NIC NOVICE


SUE IS HELPING NIC ROLL HIS FIRST D&D® CHARACTER...
HOW DO I CREATE A CHARACTER?
YOUR CHARACTER HAS SIX ABILITIES SHOWING ITS STRENGTH, INTELLIGENCE, WISDOM DEXTERITY, CONSTITUTION AND CHARISMA. THESE ARE ROLLED ON THREE SIX SIDED DICE.
TO BE A FIGHTER YOU REQUIRE A HIGH STRENGTH BUT TO BE A MAGIC USER YOU NEED A HIGH INTELLIGENCE... SOME OF YOUR ROLLS WILL BE HIGHER THAN OTHERS MAKING YOU BETTER AT CERTAIN THINGS THAN OTHERS...
NIC THROWS THE DICE.....

TO ROLE PLAYING GAMES

Sue — 'The door flies open revealing a small, roughly hewn room, dimly lit by a flickering torch in the north wall.'

Knowing the rules for surprise, she rolls two dice; neither side is surprised by the presence of the other.

Sue — 'Around the table are six small ugly human-like creatures with grey skin and red glowing eyes. They grab their weapons and move to attack you shouting as they come!'

Jon — 'Goblins! This should be easy. I'll attack the nearest one.'

Anne — 'I'll hit one with my mace.'

Terry — 'I'm going to watch the corridor to make sure nothing takes us from behind.'

Alan — 'I'm casting my **sleep** spell.'

Jon — 'Make sure you don't sleep us by mistake.'

Sue — 'Before you or the goblins can act I require an initiative throw. I'll roll for the goblins and one of you roll for your side, the highest score goes first.'

Anne — 'A six.'

Sue — 'Okay. You go first, the goblins only got a one. Fighters can attack and the magic user can cast his spell.'

Jon rolls a die and Sue checks it on a special combat table; the throw, however, is not high enough and Jon misses. Anne does better, scoring a hit, she now rolls a second die to see whether she kills the goblin or merely wounds it. Sue checks the damage rolled by Anne against the goblin's statistics and discovers that the goblin is killed instantly.

Sue — 'Jon, your goblin ducked beneath your sword, but Anne, you killed yours easily.'

Knowing how Alan's **sleep** spell works, Sue asks him to roll two dice and total the scores.

Alan — 'Five!'

Sue — 'Well done. The remaining goblins fall to the floor in a deep sleep.'

Terry — 'My thief will cut their throats and go through their pockets....'

Jon — Hang on! You can't do that. They're defenceless. It's not right!'

Terry — 'Look. They're evil and they're not going to sleep forever!'

Anne — 'Yeah, kill them. We can't leave them here. They may attack us later, and the world will be a better place without them anyway.'

Jon — 'Well, I don't know. I suppose we have to get rid of evil but I'd rather do it in a fair fight.'

Alan — 'I'll search the room for chests or anything else that's interesting.'

Sue — 'You find an iron bound chest under the table.'

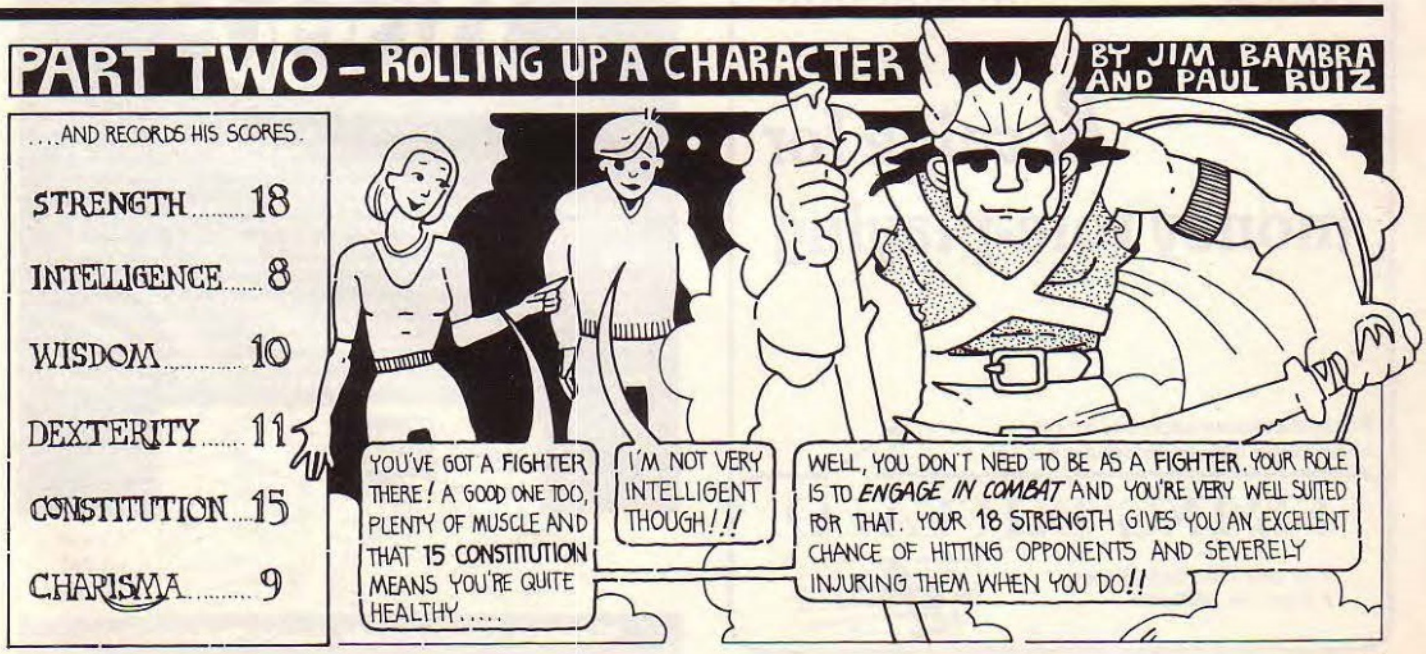
Terry — 'When I've killed the goblins I'll search them for a key.'

Sue — 'Okay. You find 8 silver pieces, a length of string and a key.'

Terry — 'I'll see if the key fits the lock on the chest. It may contain gold, gems, and even magic.'

PART TWO - ROLLING UP A CHARACTER

BY JIM BAMBRA AND PAUL RUIZ


....AND RECORDS HIS SCORES.
STRENGTH..... 18
INTELLIGENCE..... 8
WISDOM..... 10
DEXTERITY..... 11
CONSTITUTION...15
CHARISMA..... 9
YOU'VE GOT A FIGHTER THERE! A GOOD ONE TOO, PLENTY OF MUSCLE AND THAT 15 CONSTITUTION MEANS YOU'RE QUITE HEALTHY.....
I'M NOT VERY INTELLIGENT THOUGH!!!
WELL, YOU DON'T NEED TO BE AS A FIGHTER. YOUR ROLE IS TO ENGAGE IN COMBAT AND YOU'RE VERY WELL SUITED FOR THAT. YOUR 18 STRENGTH GIVES YOU AN EXCELLENT CHANCE OF HITTING OPPONENTS AND SEVERELY INJURING THEM WHEN YOU DO!!

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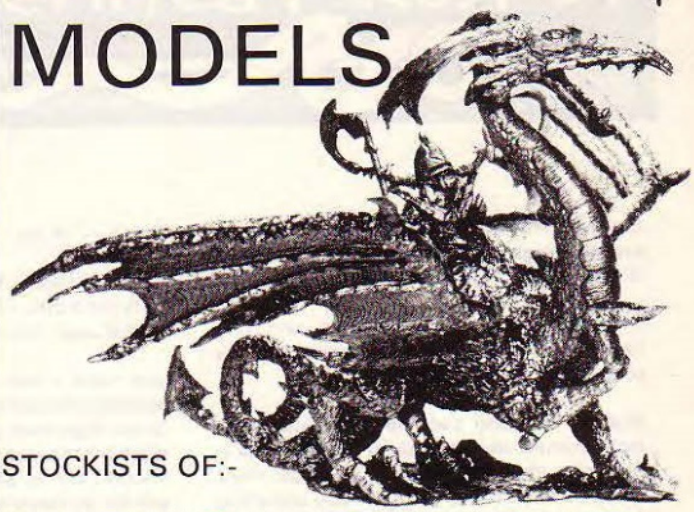

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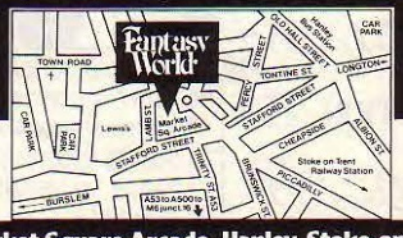

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The hero, sword in hand, enters the lair of the Ghastly Ghoblins. Do you cry 'I'd never go in the front'? In an RPG you have the opportunity to decide what happens.

An aspect of the D&D® game that, I suspect, has caused much confusion for the uninitiated revolves around the issue of winning. In conventional games, one of the first things that a novice wants to know is how do you win? A search through the D&D rulebooks reveals no such information; there is no section conveniently entitled 'winning the game' or 'victory conditions'. So how *do* you win?

The answer is that you don't; a role-playing game (RPG) is a game with no winners and no losers.

Why should anyone want to play a game that can't be won? It could be argued that in almost any game it is not the winning that matters, but playing of the game. In most cases, there just isn't sufficient interest in a game, once the competitive element is removed, to leave much point in playing it. In the D&D game there is.

In a conventional game the rules form a rigidly-defined system directed towards a single objective. In something simple like Ludo, the objective is getting all your pieces home first. All the rules relate to that in one way or another. If no-one won Ludo because there was no provision for winning in the rules, then there would be no point in any of the rules, nor in the game itself.

Bounded by imagination

In D&D, as I mentioned last time round, the rules do relate to something else; they relate to resolving the effects of a decision made by a player-character. The decisions that a player-character makes are not bounded by any rigid system, but by imagination and the constraints of conventional feasibility alone. The most important thing, therefore, is not who wins, but what happens to a player-character as a result of each of his decisions.

The most useful comparison to be made is between the D&D game and a fantasy novel. Let us suppose that you are reading such a novel and have just reached the point where the hero, sword in hand, enters the lair of the Ghastly Ghoblins. You might say to yourself: 'Well! If I were him I would never go straight in the front entrance to the lair like that. I'd go round the back and scout for a less well-guarded entrance.' In a book, however, the author has the final word on what happens. The point of an RPG is to create the same sort of situation, only in this case you, in the role of one of the characters, get the chance to decide what happens.

So one can think of the 'Dungeonmaster' as the author of the game, and the players as the readers. Instead of the author doing all the work, with the readers in a passive role, the players get to shape the plot by determining what the actions of principal characters are. The DM provides background, scenery and supporting characters. The outcome of everything is determined by the heroes and heroines of the tale.

A page for the not-so-experienced adventurer

This demonstrates two things. First, there is no restriction on player's actions in the rules. If players were allowed to perform only one of half-a-dozen actions, as in some computer fantasy games, the possible developments of the plot would be finite. In the D&D game a chain of events can begin with an idea from one player, events which will be as original as the idea. The rules cannot cover every possible situation, so the rules are open-ended.

The second thing is that the objective of the game is different from that of an ordinary game. You might say that if the hero succeeds in rescuing the princess or destroying the evil wizard, then he 'wins'. In fact, the only winners in a novel are those figures who come over as being the most believable and interesting. This is equally true of RPGs. A character whose exploits are interesting, who is entirely involved in the fantasy world where he lives, is far more a 'winner' than one amassing riches to rival Croesus and going up twenty levels, yet who remains no more than a set of statistics on paper.

It tends to happen that players who expect D&D to play like other games want to do something they can call winning. They play exclusively to gain treasure, on the basis that the richest character with the highest level after a number of adventures is the winner. The same 'lust for victory' has disabled many a campaign when the DM falls for it. When the DM gets the idea that he can win by building a killer dungeon that no-one can last more than two adventures in, players soon give up. The DM certainly loses this way; he loses players for a start.

The inverse is also true. DMs compete with others by having higher level characters in their dungeons than exist in anyone else's. I have seen give-away dungeons where even the experience points for overcoming monsters have been changed. This presents no challenge for players.

The real way to win as a DM is to have a campaign that is involved and gripping, that players will remember and talk about when the game itself is over. Characters will feel they have accomplished something that has nothing to do with a paper bank-balance of 500,000 gold pieces. The game takes a joint effort by DM and players to create real rewards.

When you get a campaign with significant non-player characters, a background full of detail and lots of interesting leads lying around for players to follow to adventure, and when you get players prepared to play 'in character' rather than as themselves, then the game is much more than moving a counter on a board. One is playing a memorable game. Your 'novel' might never be published, but it will be the next best thing to living in a fantasy world.

Roger Musson

The big, bad Barbarian

BARBARIANS

Barbarians are a sub-class of fighters. At first glance they might seem rather similar to plain fighters but a thorough study of the sub-class will reveal that they are by far the most singular type in the whole fighting genre (also including fighters, rangers and paladins).

Character abilities

Barbarians have no major characteristics and thus gain neither a penalty nor a bonus with respect to experience points. Barbarians never have psionic ability *per se*. To determine characteristics of a barbarian character use the following table.

Ability	Dice to find point score	Special or bonus
Strength	best 3 of 9d6	as per fighter
Intelligence	3d6	as per table in PH
Wisdom	4d4	as per table in PH
Dexterity	best 3 of 7d6	+2/point over 14★
Constitution	best 3 of 8d6	+2 hp/point over 14
Charisma	3d6	as per table in PH

★ — Dexterity bonus to armour class applies only when armour is below the *fairly bulky* or *bulky* armour types. If at least *fairly bulky* armour is to be worn, reduce the bonus to +1 per point of dexterity in excess of 14.

Race of barbarian characters

Only humans can be barbarians.

CHARACTER CLASSES TABLE I (additional)

Class of character	Hit die type	Max. Number of hit dice	Spell ability	Class level limit
Barbarian	d12	8★	no★★	none

★ — The initial die roll for a barbarian character can never be less than 7, with scores of 1 to 6 being treated as 7, but all additional rolls are as shown by the die.

★★ — Some barbarian abilities resemble spells, but these innate *spell-like* abilities are not spell abilities.

CHARACTER CLASSES TABLE II (additional)

Class of Character	Armour	Shield	Weapons	Oil	Poison
Barbarian	any★	any	any	yes	?

★ — Partial loss of dexterity bonus (see note under 'Character abilities' above) will make wearing of *fairly bulky* or *bulky* armour unlikely.

Magical armour, shields and weaponry

Barbarians detest magic and distrust those who use it. They will refuse to employ any sort of magical item if they recognise it as such. They will destroy magical items if they have their way.

While a magic-user will be shunned by barbarians, clerical spells are not regarded as magic (except for the more powerful spells not typically usable by a tribal shaman or low-level cleric), so barbarians will associate with clerics on occasion.

The Barbarian: General description

Barbarians are a sub-class of fighters who are adept at many skills necessary for survival in a hostile environment. These skills include rapid movement, climbing, use of many weapons, a certain 'sixth sense' and many secondary and tertiary skills. They are likewise tough and able to recover from damage quickly.

Barbarians may be of any non-lawful alignment.

The base movement rate for a barbarian is 15 inches.

Languages

Barbarians know only how to speak their own native tribal/national tongue and Common. A barbarian must learn to read and write if those skills are desired. A barbarian can learn languages according to his or her own intelligence. In any case, a barbarian does not use alignment language of any sort.

Special skills

A barbarian climbs trees and natural cliffs (ledges, mountains, and so on) as a thief of the same level would climb *walls*. Barbarians may also climb walls of other kinds once they have had the opportunity to practise scaling a particular type of surface. Barbarians can hide in natural surroundings as a thief of three levels higher would *hide in shadows* if the terrain is familiar to them, otherwise they hide as a thief of the same level.

Secondary skills

Every barbarian possesses all of the following secondary skills:

Survival: This skill includes hunting, small animal trapping, fishing, food gathering, shelter building, body covering and fire making.

First Aid: This skill includes binding wounds, setting sprains or broken bones, knowing and applying natural cures for minor illnesses, and concocting and/or applying natural poison antidotes (10% chance of success unless poison form is known: then chance rises to 50% plus victim's constitution).

Outdoor Craft: This skill includes animal identification, plant identification, direction determination and general weather protection.

Tracking: This skill is equal to that of a ranger of the same level, but a barbarian may track only in the outdoors.

Secondary skills are generally not usable (certainly not to their fullest potential) in areas which are unfamiliar to the barbarian, although the skills can be applied to a new locale with differing flora, fauna and climate after about one month of continual exposure to the new area.

Tertiary skills

Barbarians will have one or more of the following tertiary skills depending on the locale and culture from which they originate.

Animal Handling: Usually dogs but possibly some other animals such as wolves, large birds, giant lynx, and so on.

Horsemanship: This skill could also include the handling of draft teams.

by Gary Gygax

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Long-distance Signalling: Drums, smoke, mirror flashes and so on.

Running: This skill implies that the barbarian can move at double normal speed for no fewer than three days before having to 'rest' by spending a day moving at normal speed. Similarly, endurance will be twice normal for movement situations.

Small Craft, Paddled: This skill includes the building and use of small canoes and boats.

Small Craft, Rowed: This skill includes the building of wooden boats and the rowing and/or sailing of them.

Sound Imitation: This skill includes the mimicking of bird and animal calls and sounds, either for luring those creatures or for signalling purposes.

Trap Building: This skill includes the ability to construct deadfalls, pits and other traps for large and even very large animals and like creatures.

Special abilities and defenses

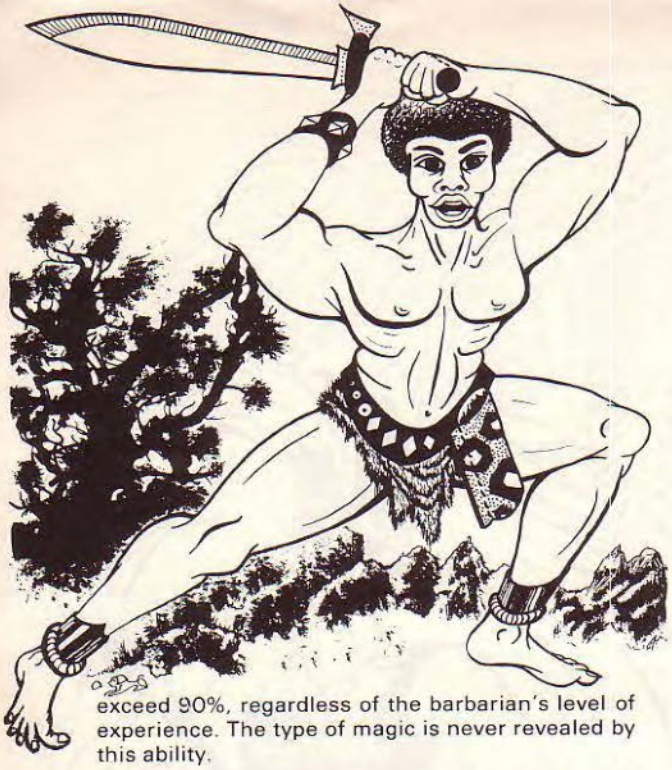
Barbarians have the following special characteristics.

Surprise: Barbarians surprise opponents at least 50% of the time, increasing to 4 in 6 (66.6%) when they are in familiar terrain. In turn they are surprised themselves only 10% of the time, 5% in familiar terrain.

Back Attack: Any attempt to attack a barbarian from behind, including such attacks by assassins and/or thieves, has a 5% chance per level of the barbarian of being detected and countered. That is, if a barbarian detects a back attack (with a 5% chance of so doing if he or she is 1st level, 10% if 2nd etc.), the barbarian avoids the attack form. The former back attack becomes a normal attack. The barbarian is also then entitled to attack the former back attacker, even though the barbarian may already have engaged in what would otherwise have been his or her full normal combat for that round.

Leaping and Springing: Barbarians are able to leap up to a maximum distance of 10 feet forward, 3 feet backward, or 3 feet upward from a standing start. If able to move freely and get a running start, the forward leap can range from 16 to 21 feet, and the upward leap from $4^1/_2$ to 6 feet (d6 and d4 respectively). *Springing* under similar circumstances gives an upward distance of 4—7 feet, depending upon the surface used as a step to gain height and 'spring'.

Detect magic: Barbarians have a base 25% chance of detecting any sort of magic other than an *illusion/phantasm* spell. This applies to items or spells, but not to persons who are able to effect magic. For each level the barbarian gains above the 1st level, an additional 5% to the chance to *detect magic* is gained. The chance to so detect may never



exceed 90%, regardless of the barbarian's level of experience. The type of magic is never revealed by this ability.

Detect illusion: Barbarians have a 5% chance per level of determining that some sight, sound or other sense is actually an *illusion/phantasm* spell of some type. Regardless of the barbarian's level, however, the chance to so detect such spells may never exceed 75%.

BARBARIANS (FIGHTERS) TABLE I.

Experience Points	Experience Level	12-sided dice for accumulated Hit Points	Level Title
0—6,000	1	1★	Barbarian
6,001—12,000	2	2	Barbarian
12,001—24,000	3	3	Barbarian
24,001—48,000	4	4	Barbarian
48,001—80,000	5	5	Barbarian
80,001—150,000	6	6	Barbarian
150,001—275,000	7	7	Barbarian
275,001—500,000	8	8	Barbarian
500,001—1,000,000	9	8+4	Barbarian
1,000,001—1,500,000	10	8+8	Barbarian
1,500,001—2,000,000	11	8+12	Barbarian

500,000 experience points for each additional level above the 11th

★ — Initial die roll for hit points must be at least 7; rolls of 1 to 6 are treated as the minimum result of 7 points.

BARBARIANS' ATTACKS PER MELEE ROUND TABLE

Level	Attacks per Melee Round
Barbarian 1-5	1/1 round
Barbarian 6-10	3/2 round
Barbarian 11 & up	2/1 round

WEAPON PROFICIENCY TABLE

Class of Character	Initial Number of Weapons	Non-proficiency Penalty	Added Proficiency in Weapons/Level
Barbarian	6	-1	1/2 levels

Notes Regarding Weapon Proficiency Table:
Initial number of weapons *must* include Axe (Hand), Knife, and Spear. One or more additional required weapons based on the native area may optionally be decreed by the DM.

Charisma:
When dealing with other barbarians, a given barbarian adds his or her level of experience to his or her charisma total to get an effective charisma effect upon other barbarians.

Combat:
Barbarians use the table for normal fighters. They need no magic weapons to hit magic-laden monsters such as gargoyles, demons or golems.

Recovery of Hit Points:
Hit points are recovered at twice the normal rate, and barbarians can even get them back at the normal rate while active. Thus, rest allows regaining of lost hit points at +2 points per day, and while moving and/or adventuring points are regained at +1 per day.

Saving Throws:
All barbarians have the following bonuses to their saving throws:

vs. poison	+4
paralysation	+3
death magic	+3
petrification	+3
polymorph	+3
rod, staff, wand	+2
breath weapon	+2
spell	+1

The above bonuses are in addition to any others which might be applicable.

Native Territory:
It is mandatory that barbarian characters come from some out-of-the-way state or area. Typically they will come from wild tribes, nomads or groups of savages. Such uncivilized areas are the only places that can generate the necessary surroundings to produce individuals of the stock from which barbarian fighters would be drawn.

Relating this to the WORLD OF GREYHAWK™ map, the lands of the Frost, Ice and Snow Barbarians, as well as the Hold of Stonefist, would produce Scandinavian/Slavic-type barbarian fighters. These characters would employ broad swords and short bows as additional required initial weapons. Horsemanship would be nominal at best, but running would be normal and in most cases the skill of making and manning rowed boats would exist.

Nomads from the Rovers of the Barrens, Tiger, and Wolf Nomads would be excellent horsemen, and the former group would have running skill as well. The Rovers, being the most barbaric group, would also be likely to generate individuals with skills in animal handling, paddled small craft, sound imitation and trap building. The other nomads would be most effective in long distance signalling. Rovers would be skilled in weapons such as the club, javelin, and lasso or short bow. Nomads would have such weapons as the lance, scimitar, and composite short bow.

Savages from the Amedio Jungle or Hepmonaland would have skills in long distance signalling, running, possibly paddled small craft, sound imitation and trap building. Their required initial weapons would also include the blowgun or short bow, club, and dart or javelin in the Amedio. With respect to Hepmonaland, atlatl and javelin, club and short sword are typical weapons.

From the foregoing, the DM can understand why it is important to give barbarian characters a native homeland. Not only does this help determine weapons initially known, but it also serves as a base for judgement as to the skills and abilities of the barbarian when he or she ventures into places outside native homelands. After a period of dwelling in a new area, a barbarian character does become as effective as he or she is in his or her native territory, but until then many of the abilities and skills of the character will be severely curtailed.

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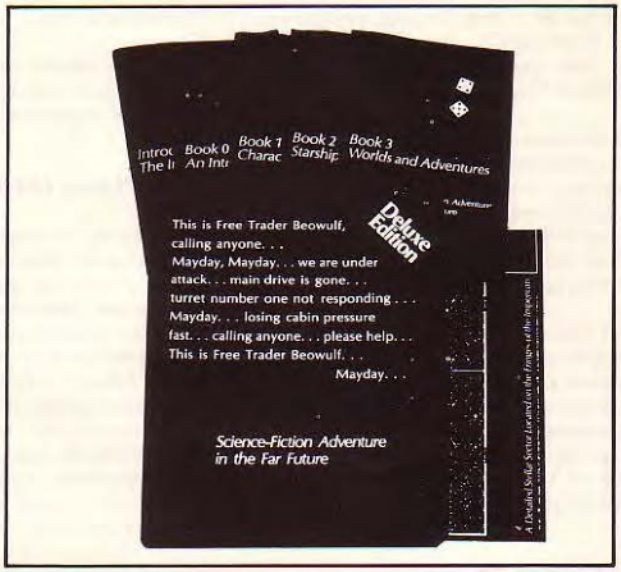
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GamesFair '83

You can't help but wonder what the students and staff at the University of Reading think of the annual jamboree that is GamesFair. One young lady entered the gaming hall and stared bemusedly at the players.

'What's going on?' she asked. I gave her as reasonable an explanation as I could in the available time. 'You mean they're having fun?' she gaped, looking at the fierce concentration on the faces of the nearest group of players, 'I thought they were sitting exams... '

Some of them, of course, were sitting through a tough test; the AD&D™ Open Competition was keenly contested. However, everyone who actually arrived at the Union building said they had a good time; not everyone could really remember after a couple of late nights, but they were prepared to go along with the majority.

Guest of Honour

The guest of honour, E. Gary Gygax, President of TSR Inc., was very impressed with what he saw. He praised the friendliness of the convention, and was delighted with the enjoyment players were getting from their gaming.

Throughout the weekend Gary was to be found in conversation with small groups of gamers, happy to talk about all kinds of topics. On Friday night, he held a seminar session for two hours or more, during which he answered an equally wide range of questions on the development of TSR and the D&D® game, past present and future. Many of the delegates were surprised at how approachable Gary is, after all the negative press he has received in the hobby. He made it clear that he doesn't like unfounded or petty criticism of the D&D games, but he recognises that they are not perfect yet and so is prepared to listen to most other objections.

Mind you — he horrified a few of the purists with one remark. Referring to the art of DM-ing, he told those assembled that a good referee only rolls the dice for the sound they make. He just *decides* what happens! You could have heard a pin drop...

He also passed on a lot of inside news for future developments of the D&D and AD&D games. Once all the legal niceties are sorted out, Gary hopes to see some Conan modules or ENDLESS QUEST™ books published. He hopes to be the adviser on the next Conan movie, by the way, which must be good news for R.E.Howard fans.

The D&D movie progresses. Gary enthused about the script and predicted it would fall 'between *Star Wars* and *E.T.*'

Plans for the future

The games themselves are receiving considerable attention. The Basic and Expert rules are being revised and a Companion Set will follow. Plans are afoot for considerable additions to the Advanced game, including Players Handbook II, DMG II, a host of new spells, new character classes, new rules to cope with specialisation for most of the classes, adaptations to the rules governing the different planes, the possible transfer of the psionics rules to the more suitable STARFRONTIERS™ game...

With very little organising from TSR staff, the gamers got on with the business of having a good time. At 1.30p.m. on Friday the organisers were looking about in horror at a swell of milling delegates, who were themselves staring blankly at stacked tables and chairs. Ten minutes later the dice were rolling and the whole thing was off and running. None of the bemused staff had lifted a finger. People came together easily in the informal atmosphere, which meant that no-one had to feel left out. It was an excellent example of what gaming is all about — fun.

Perhaps the best example of this spirit was the group in the semi-final of the Open who were annihilated some thirty minutes before the end. Without a word of complaint, they all got up and went off in search of solace and coffee. When he checked his notes, the DM realised that he had goofed on his map-reading, and confessed to Graeme Morris, the author, that this was so. GM tannoyed for the party to return, they all trooped back in and carried on as if nothing had happened, except that they played injury time. Still none of them qualified, and still no-one complained. Chatting with two of them later, I was told that they had thought it funny when one minute they were strolling through quite happily, and the next they had been wiped out, but since they'd made it through the *first* round despite getting into all sorts of stupid situations, they were quite content...

Paul Cockburn

The Guest of Honour, Gary Gygax (left), holds court in the coffee bar

Don Turnbull (left) gloats over his victory on the pinball table; Ian Livingstone refuses to show his sprained wrist to the camera in case it prejudices a fair account.

Tom Kirby (right) and Francis Tresham demonstrate just how much fun a game of Westward Ho! can be!

Those Awfully Nice Chappies From Chester, winners of the team contest, and (inset) Lewis Jardine, winner of the Open competition.

The Winners Reveal Nearly Everything

The centrepiece of the GamesFair '83 weekend was the **AD&D™ Open** competition. It ran from Saturday morning through to the final on Sunday afternoon. That's a lot of games-playing, even for keen dungeoneers; how much more it must have seemed for the eventual winner, Lewis Jardine, who came up with the Exeter University club. Lewis is a Runequest aficionado (we must have slipped up somewhere) and was badgered into entering by the club president, the renowned Tina Monk. Bearing in mind that 70% of the delegates were from perishing Exeter, Lewis was a popular and deserving winner.

This was the obvious man to approach about the art of success in role-playing. Lewis enjoyed the adventure more the longer it went on:

'It gave rewards for thinking. To win you had to solve problems, and the successful player was going to be the one who came out with a few bright ideas. Too many players just shout instructions at the DM — do this, do that — yet he's only human. I tend to play the quiet reclusive type. That doesn't mean you can sit silently either; the team has to do well if you are going to, so you have to control those who are pulling the wrong way.

'Actually, saying that, we made a complete dog's breakfast of the final. I wasn't worried about winning — I play for enjoyment. In this game 'losing' doesn't mean you did anything wrong.'

Lewis may be right, but a few of those who didn't qualify were guilty of tiny little errors of judgement. The quickest casualty in the first round came after thirty minutes — a poor effort compared with a three-minute fatality in the first year.

Some of the better examples of how **not** to win a competitive RPG came during the course of the AD&D team contest, won eventually by those Awfully Nice Chappies from Chester (Paul Abbot, Dave Hughes, Russell Liley, Patrick Reed, and Andrew Sherman). Their success was in no way inhibited by the fact that they were nearly the only group to survive the adventure!

The module for the Team competition was the one you will find in the centre of this magazine, *For the Honour of the Tribe*. It isn't giving away any secrets to pass on the advice that one should try to avoid losing all the members of the party in combat with the denizens of the scenario. Characters who raid the ale butts to the exclusion of all else are likewise penalised. One infamous party seemed to be stopping for little naps so often that the adventure took two weeks!

If you are going to lose anyone, do it with style. The party that came last of the twenty in this competition — thereby winning the peerless award of 5 exquisitely painted Invisible Stalker models — burnt down a building that they still occupied when they realised they were trapped. That's real barbarian role-playing. If it weren't for the fact that they had made such a complete hash of the rest of the adventure, they might have been 19th, or even 18th!

The Nice Chappies offered the following advice — applicable, they say, to any adventure. Never actually burst **into** a room. Kick the door open if need be, but then let the bad guys out two at a time. Don't fall off walls (they confess to this being their only failing of the day). Throw lots of 20s.

Do not accept the following advice, offered by one of the many casualties: 'If barbarians aren't supposed to deal with Magic-Users, and the chief did a deal with the magician up the road, shouldn't we jump on the chief?'

ILLUMINATIONS

GAMES SPACE

SPACE OPERA 15mm figures are now available in the UK. They are made under licence by Games of Liverpool thus avoiding the necessity of an expensive jump through hyper-space from their home star base in New York. Currently on offer are four packs, each containing five different figures. Two of the packs are **HUMAN ADVENTURERS** and two are **ALIEN ADVENTURERS.** 55p per pack.

The **TRAVELLER BASIC SET** is available again from GDW via Games Workshop at £5.95 There are also two new adventures: Adventure 8 — **PRISON PLANET** and Double Adventure 6 — **DIVINE RIGHT/ NIGHT OF CONQUEST.** They are £2.50 each as is the snappily titled Supplement II — **LIBRARY DATA N-Z.**

IMAGINE™ magazine thanks Doug Cowie for his assistance with these items.

SPACE GAMES

The very popular star ship combat game Star Fleet Battles continues to expand. Task Force Games have two new releases in this series. **STAR FLEET BATTLES EXPANSION 3** has details of a new race (the Wyn), mine warfare, pseudo fighter tenders, new weapons, new ships *plus*, for those with the stamina, a mini campaign. Retails at £5.95. **BATTLE DAMAGE — CODE RED** is a simplified SFB damage system using cards in place of paper work; it costs £4.50.

HOARD OF THE RINGS

Rieder (sic) Games of Leicester are offering **FANTASY JEWELRY** for the gamer who has everything. The first release is a beautifully made **SKULL RING.** This is full size, made to jeweller's standards in solid bronze or nickel silver. Price £3.95. Further intriguing releases are promised.

LOOSE CHITS

Yaquinto Games have released **ASCENT TO HELL**(£3.95), the sixth and final part to the **MAN, MYTH & MAGIC** role playing game's Adventure One. This is the episode in which you finally find out what all those leprechauns, druids, Romans and Egyptians were *really* up to.

Fantasy Games Unlimited have finally released the revision of the popular **CHIVALRY & SORCERY** role playing game. The original C&S was renowned in equal proportions, for its wealth of fascinating detail and its near unplayability. The Second Edition hopes to retain the former and eradicate the latter. Time will tell...

CRASIMOFF'S WORLD

POSTAL GAME

Crasimoff's World is a fantasy game of exploration and adventure. As a player you assume the role of chieftain in a band of brave adventurers set on gaining knowledge and power. You must create a party of nine fellow travellers, from three character classes (fighter, mage and priest) to assist your chieftain.

Your party will set out from a small town, knowing nothing about the world apart from a few rumours. As you travel you will learn more about the land and its secrets, encountering other parties, races and creatures. There are tokens detailing magic items, spells, creatures, gods, money and many more things that you will discover later in the game.

'KJC Games has been running Crasimoff's World for over a year now, and the effort the gamesmaster puts into each turn never ceases to amaze me. Most players find themselves offered a different scenario each turn, or find that a new twist has happened to an existing adventure.'

as reviewed in

WHITE DWARF Nº 37

If you wish to enrol in Crasimoff's world send a £5 cheque/P.O. payable to K.J.C. Games. For this you will receive a rulebook, set up material, and the first four rounds. Future rounds are £1.25 each. Copies of the White Dwarf review are available free of charge from K.J.C. Games.

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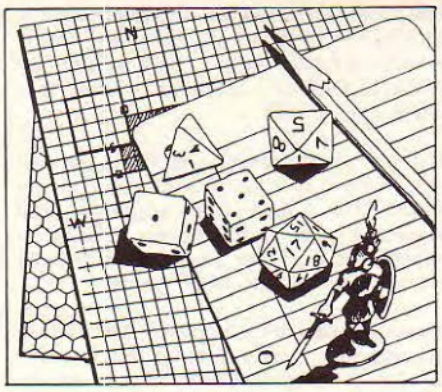
EXIT 'THE GAMER' — ENTER 'GAMES GAZETTE'

The confusion about the fate of **The Gamer** was made all the worse for a number of people by the announcement of the arrival of a new general gaming publication, entitled **Games Gazette**.

It would now appear that there will be no rescue for The Gamer. As yet, we have not heard of any definitive explanation for the folding of this well-respected magazine, but we understand that it has ceased publication.

The new publication stepped quickly into the breach. It was scheduled for release on the 18th March as a bi-monthly publication with news, views, profiles and feature articles covering a wider range of subject matter than its predecessor. Despite the obvious similarity in content, and the fact that Games Gazette is being publicised most strongly to ex-Gamer readers, the editor and publisher of the Gazette, Clive Barnden, has no previous connection with The Gamer. He intends the Gazette to cater for the more general gaming public, featuring board and family games predominantly.

The publicity mailing that Mr. Barnden sent out included a questionnaire to be filled in by the recipient and sent back to the Gazette so that an accurate picture of readers' interests could be built up. The first issue of the Gazette published the results of this survey.



The new magazine was launched with a print run of 1500. Initially it is available on subscription *only* for £5.50pa. As an introductory offer, interested readers can get the first issue for £1, which will be taken off the price of a subscription, if this is subsequently taken out.

Games Gazette is available from:
Clive Barnden, 4 Old Barn Road, Leybourne, Maidstone, KENT ME19 SHQ. Cheques should be made out to Games Gazette.

TRANSATLANTIC TALES

Having warned you last month that our information about new TSR releases can often be incorrect by the time this magazine hits the streets, we begin this month with an apology. I2 **TOMB OF THE LIZARD KING** is not yet on sale; this column was misleading in # 1 in the sense that although we have seen a copy of this module, it has not yet been officially released. It should arrive here in June — no promises though — with I4 **OASIS OF THE WHITE PALM** and M1 **BLIZZARD PASS**.

The latest releases will be reviewed in the next issue of IMAGINE™ magazine. These are I3 **PHARAOH**, SF1 **PLANET OF MYSTERY** and SF2 **STARSPAWN OF VOLTURNUS**, along with another set of the **ENDLESS QUEST™** books.

Beyond this the next releases should be UK1 **BEYOND THE CRYSTAL CAVE**, the **STARFRONTIERS™** mini-module **ASSAULT ON THE SS OMICRON**, and the **TOP SECRET®** module TS004 **OPERATION FIRST PASS**.

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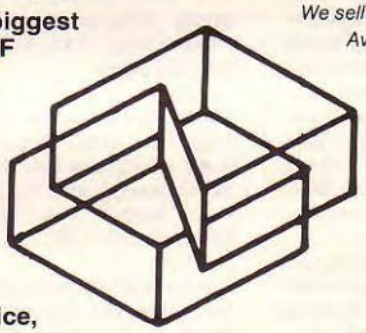

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LETTERS

While we are waiting – with bated breath – for the arrival of the first sackful of mail about issue 1 of IMAGINE™ magazine, we will take the opportunity to print a few reviews and comments that appeared in some of the fanzines. We sent several editors copies of the dummy issue of the magazine; these reviews represent the coverage that followed.

Dib, Dib, Dib *included a paragraph of general reaction to the magazine, of which the following is an extract:*

Very Fantasy Role-Playing orientated as you'd expect from a TSR mag, and similar to **White Dwarf** and **DRAGON**™ magazines. As a beginner I found it extremely helpful and, because it was easy to understand, very interesting. Well done TSR.

Thank you, Tom Tweedy. The next extract is from Alan Parr's **Hopscotch**:

Presentation is very good and the format is very similar to that used by **Games and Puzzles** some time ago. Naturally, there is a strong emphasis on the D&D® game. At £1 it will be essential reading for addicts. The magazine shows a knowledge of the postal games scene that's unusual in a professional publication.

The most thorough and objectively constructed review of all was penned by Chris Hunter in Mike Dean's **Psychopath**. *This extract represents a reduction of a work that had already been reduced to fit into the 'zine, but it still shows considerable insight.*

The cover is a rather good poster of Elric & Moonglum by Rodney Matthews. Promised for a future issue is a short story by Anne McCaffrey — such is the purchasing power of TSR.

There is an introduction to RPGs written in the form of a painful player conversation. The author then suggests how someone new to the hobby should go about starting. The advice is decidedly biased towards the D&D® game.

There are two mini-modules. The first is introductory, pretty simple, but is well-written, leading the DM by the hand from start to finish. The second can be played by an AD&D™ party from 1st-9th level, this being achieved by insertion of different monsters, traps etc. for each level — all of the stats are given.

The first instalment of a story by John E. Black is exciting stuff. The cartoon strips are pretty abysmal.

There is the barbarian character class, which appeared in issue 63 of DRAGON™ magazine — it would seem a rip-off for those who have the original. There are also reviews of amateur magazines, something I don't remember having seen.

In conclusion, I would say that although the magazine contains some material of general use, it has a definite bias towards people new to the hobby. We shall see.

We have made an approach to Chris to bring his talents to bear on the early issues of IMAGINE™ magazine proper.

FANZINES

Once again a varied assortment of fanzines has arrived on our desks from all over the country. Any 'zine editor who would like to make use of this little bit of publicity space should send copies of their publication to us here at the Mill.

Following our report in # 1 of **IMAGINE** magazine about the activities of Mike Costello, copies of **Wargames News 2** and **The War Machine 15** arrived. The latter continues its coverage of computer gaming, offering a £24 annual subscription which nets 12 £1 issues of WM and four taped games. In addition to well-informed news coverage this issue has an article on how to beat the computer at *Tigers In The Snow*, a review of *Galaxy* including suggestions for improving the programme, and part 4 of a series on Designing of Game Spaces. A functional, compact 'zine, perhaps looking dry for want of illustration.

Wargames News has a similar look about it, and its professionalism becomes understandable when you read the list of contributors — lots of well-known hobby personalities. It contains news and comment, reviews of three of the four games from Emithill, and *Cry Havoc*, and other articles. This magazine is to board wargaming what WM is to computer games, and costs £7 for 12 issues. Joint subscriptions are available for these two 'zines, from Emjay, 17 Langbank Avenue, Rise Park, NOTTINGHAM NG5 5BU.

Dib, Dib, Dib 26, a curry favour (sic) take-away issue, covers Diplomacy and a few other postal games. It also has

CLUBS AND HOBBYMEETS

This space is available for the organisers of games playing clubs or hobbymeets to publicise their activities. Just write to Paul Cockburn, IMAGINE™ magazine, The Mill, Rathmore Road, CAMBRIDGE CB1 4AD with details of your gathering. Even after your club or 'meet has been mentioned for the first time, we will happily keep our readers up-to-date with special activities or changes. We hope to include short profiles on the activities of clubs and hobbymeets in future issues.

Having allowed Clubs to rather dominate proceedings in the last issue of IMAGINE magazine, this month we are giving more space to the Hobbymeets. First though....

Players in the **Gwent area** interested in playing Fantasy or SF RPGs, or computer games, should contact John Tribe, Hill House, Raglan, GWENT NP5 2GT. The club meets weekly. They have about 15 regular players, and anyone else interested would be welcome.

In **Scarborough**, the Scarborough Wargames Club meets every Saturday afternoon at the Technical College annexe. It runs from 2pm — 6pm. Membership is £2.50 for a year, or one can go to individual sessions for 20p. They play many different games. Contact John Hinchcliffe, 26a Esplanade Gardens, Scarborough.

Sheffield Runelords meet every Monday, from 7pm, at the Victoria Hotel, **Sheffield**, a 42 or 53 bus ride from town towards Hillsborough and Parson Cross. Contact Pete Armstrong, 23 Bramley Lane, Sheffield S13 8TY.

We have a few details of a club that might be of interest to players in **Nottingham, Derby or Leicester**. The Nottingham and Derby Boardgames Club meets every Thursday, 7pm — 10.45pm at Queens Walk Community Centre. Ring Nigel Hawthorn on (0602) 53313.

Lastly, the Sigma Games club meets every 2nd and 4th Sunday, 3pm — 11.30pm, at 3-5, The Piazza, **Covent Garden**. Members pay £1 each session, non-members £1.50. You can play any game you care to take along, though the club has its own stock of games.

There is, by the way, a contact service for role-players called **Quest**. It offers an easy way to find new players, DMs, pen-pals and clubs. Contact Trevor Graver, QUEST, 2 Essex Court, Hammersmith Grove, Hammersmith, LONDON W6 for a registration form. All you will have to do is fill it in and send it to Trevor along with a cheque or postal order for £1.50. Everyone on the register will get quarterly listings of gamers and clubs.

If you are interested in widening your contacts in the play-by-mail field, Hobbymeets are a good way to introduce yourself. We mentioned a few on these pages last issue, but this time we have tried to give more details of each 'meet.

The **Godalming** hobbymeet we listed last issue meets at the Red Lion in the High Street. The organiser is not as given in # 1, but is, in fact, Richard Bass, Lingwood, The Mount, Grayswood, Haslewood, Surrey. Our apologies to him and to Richard Walkerdine.

Alan Parr, the moving force behind the **Cambridge** 'meet, also runs one at

fanzine reviews and lots of letters. It isn't very well produced, but this scarcely matters at £1 for 3 issues. Available from Tom Tweedy, 29 Stanley Hill Avenue, BUCKS. HP7 9BD.

Hopscotch 29, at 20p, is even better value. Alan Parr, 6 Longfield Gardens, Tring, HERTS. HP23 4DN, is the editor. This is a special beginners' issue, containing a host of play-by-mail games, plus chat, letters and fanzine reviews.

More of the same can be found in **Psychopath 5**, from Mike Dean, Rm 38B West Park Hall, 319 Perth Road, DUNDEE DD2 1NN. It runs *En Garde*, *Sopwith* and others, with an editorial and plenty of letters. We thought Chris Hunter's review of the dummy issue of IMAGINE™ magazine was the most incisive view of the strength and weaknesses of that trial run to appear in any fanzine.

And then there is **Walamalaysia Gazette 28**, from Dave Thorby, 200 Lavender Hill, Enfield, MIDDX. EN2 8NJ. It runs Diplomacy and has more than a passing interest in computer gaming. The best bit is the list of 'new computer games' — fancy a version of a seven-dimensional, anti-matter Rubik's Cube existing in hyperspace, travelling back in time, in 11 colours etc? Nice one, Dave....

Totally different is **Fantasy Advertiser 77**, a 'zine for those interested in US comics. For just 40p it really is very well produced, with catching artwork, reviews, news, lots of letters and an attractive instalment of a visual novel. It attracts advertising which adds to the artwork content. Get it from Martin Lock, 3 Marlow Court, Brittania Square, WORCESTER WR1 3DP.

A different approach to gaming is shown by **Lone Warrior 45**, the journal of the Solo Wargamers Association. It has in depth articles and reviews of solo/postal games, letters and chat, but the SWA also offers access to an Association Library and a panel of advisers. Find out more from John Bennett, 9 Oakroyd Close, Potters Bar, HERTS.

We also had **Dragonlords 15** with the naughty cover and character assassinations; **Greatest Hits 105** with more letters than ever and the Record Poll results; and **The Acolyte 44**, which makes a brave attempt to win the 'longest editorial of the year' award. We reviewed this lot last time, so we'll just promise to give them more room next issue.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

In this slot we will keep players informed of events up and down the country. Organisers of such activities should note that while inclusion in this column is free, it is entirely at the discretion of the editor.

Sol III, the 15th Star Trek Convention takes place **May 27th-30th**, at the **Grand Hotel, Birmingham**. Chekov and Scotty will be there, plus Bob Shaw and Anne McCaffrey. Details from the Convention, 39 Dersingham Avenue, LONDON E12.

Manorcon '83, incorporating the Universities Diplomacy Tournament, takes place at the **Manor House, Edgbaston, Birmingham**, from **Friday, July 29th to Sunday July 31st**. Fee £3, accommodation available. Contact Mike Benyon, 30 Smirrels Road, Hall Green, Birmingham.

Comic collectors note that **Northwest Comic Marts** are held in **Bluecoat Concert Hall, Liverpool** and **Piccadilly Plaza Exhibition Hall, Manchester**. The next Liverpool dates are **April 23rd, June 4th, August 27th, October 22nd, and December 10th**. In Manchester they are on **May 7th, July 2nd, September 17th and November 19th**. Contact Fantasy World, 10 Market Square Arcade, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent with large sae for details.

The next London marts are on **June 4th and August 6th** at the **Central Hall, Westminster**. Titan Dist., PO Box 250, LONDON E3 4RT have details.

April 10th sees the **West Mids. Military & Modelling show** at the **Alumwell Centre, Walsall**. No other details on hand.

Lastly, advance warning that GamesDay '83 will take place quite a bit later than usual, on the weekend of 5th/6th November.

Our thanks to Simon Billenness, the compiler of **20 Years On**, *the source of much of the information in this section. 20YO contains a wealth of similar information on British gaming; available from 20 Winifred Road, Old Coulsdon, SURREY CR3 3JA for 35p.*

Tyttenhanger Green, nr. **St. Albans and Hatfield**, at the Barley Mow. Write to 6 Longfield Gardens, Tring, HERTS.

In **Devon**, there is a 'meet at the Puffing Billy, Exton, on the Exeter/Exmouth road. It meets on the third Friday of the month. Contact Bob Mulholland, 2 Iddesleigh Terrace, Exton, Nr. Topsham, DEVON.

The **Liverpool** hobbymeet gets together at the United Powers, Tithebarne Strret, opposite Liverpool Polytechnic Students' Union, on the first Tuesday in the month. The contact is Alan Sharples, 20 Lingfield Grove, Broadgreen, Liverpool L14 3QL.

In **Bristol**, the play-by-mail crowd meet on the 1st Friday in the month at the Channings Hotel, Pembroke Road, Clifton. Glover Rogerson, 11 Buckingham Place, Clifton, Bristol is the man to contact.

Lastly, try The Overflow, on the corner of Old Dumbarton Road and Yorkhill Street, **Glasgow**. We think it happens on the 3rd Thursday each month. Doug Rowling, No.3 Top Left, 50 Kelvingrove Street, Glasgow G3 7RZ will know for sure.

FIRESEEK *(Jan 20 — Feb 18)*

A good time to do penance in your aligned church or chapel, asking forgiveness for all the 'sins' you have committed during the past month. Luck is on your side, and good fortune is at hand.

READYING *(Feb 19 — Mar 20)*

Beware large hairy monsters. Keep out of fights. Do not plan to take any long, hazardous trips. Keep your weapon clean at all times.

COLDEVEN *(Mar 21 — April 20)*

A stranger may lead you onto the path of great fortunes, but take extra care as maiming or even Death await around the next corner. Beware Assassins, even if you are a member of their guild.

PLANTING *(April 21 — May 20)*

Invest wisely, this is the right time to become prosperous. Do not lend money or material goods to anyone, despite how 'close' the would-be borrower is to you. Be brave in battle, the stars are on your side, you can defeat even the strongest opponent(s).

FLOCKTIME *(May 21 — June 20)*

Take a journey to a distant land, things are hotting up uncomfortably around you. Go alone or with one trusted friend, but do not trust him/her. Keep your money-belt tight. Steer clear of two-legged adversaries.

To determine your character's 'star-sign', made a note of when s/he was first created, and check that date against the list...

WEALSUN *(June 21 — July 20)*

Make daily prayers to your deity. Use half of any wealth gained this month as offering to the god of your choice. Gain favour with others by 'toadying'. Be a nice-guy/girl, offer no offence nor take any. Have plenty of flowers handy.

REAPING *(July 21 — Aug 21)*

You will meet a dark stranger (probably an orc). Do not offend or harm him, but offer him friendship and compassion. Feed and clothe him, give him money. Attack any fair-skinned creatures who upset you, but attempt to end the offence without a death.

GOODMONTH *(Aug 22 — Sept 22)*

A get-together with friends could prove embarrassing. Keep off alcoholic beverages. Observe the 'good neighbours' guide and do not be over attentive to a mate's husband or wife.

HARVESTER *(Sept 23 — Oct 22)*

Time for a change. Consider new employment. Beware of traps.

PATCHWALL *(Oct 23 — Nov 22)*

Good period for Dragon slaying. Venture forth with a new spirit of adventure. Keep your weapon ready at all times. Someone may be watching you. Beware of elves and gnomes.

READY'REAT *(Nov 23 — Dec 20)*

Make new friends, but do not upset old buddies. Attempt to contact a long-lost (dead?) pal from years past. Beware of foul creatures. Pray regularly for guidance.

SUNSEBB *(Dec 21 — Jan 19)*

The time is right for love. Give your heart readily. Forget your conscience and act on impulse. Trust everyone. Have no fear, everyone loves you. Leave your weapons at home and travel out freely wherever you feel the need takes you.

Chris Baylis

This feature has already appeared in S.E.W.A.R.S., the fanzine published by Chris Baylis.

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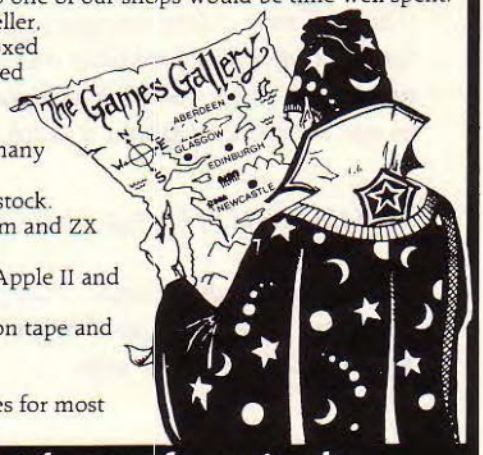

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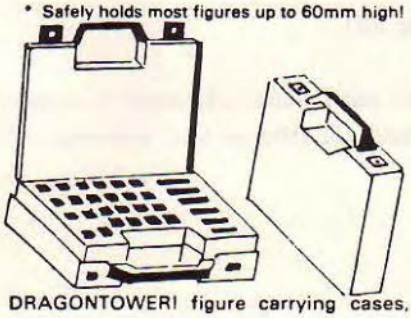

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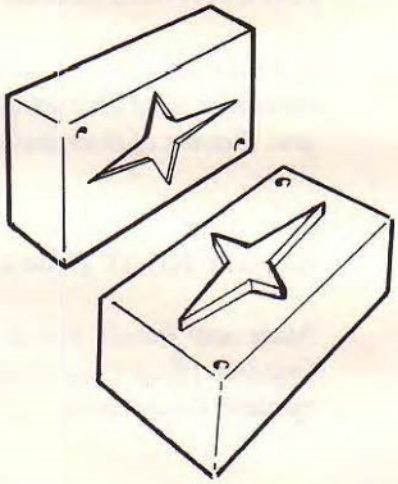

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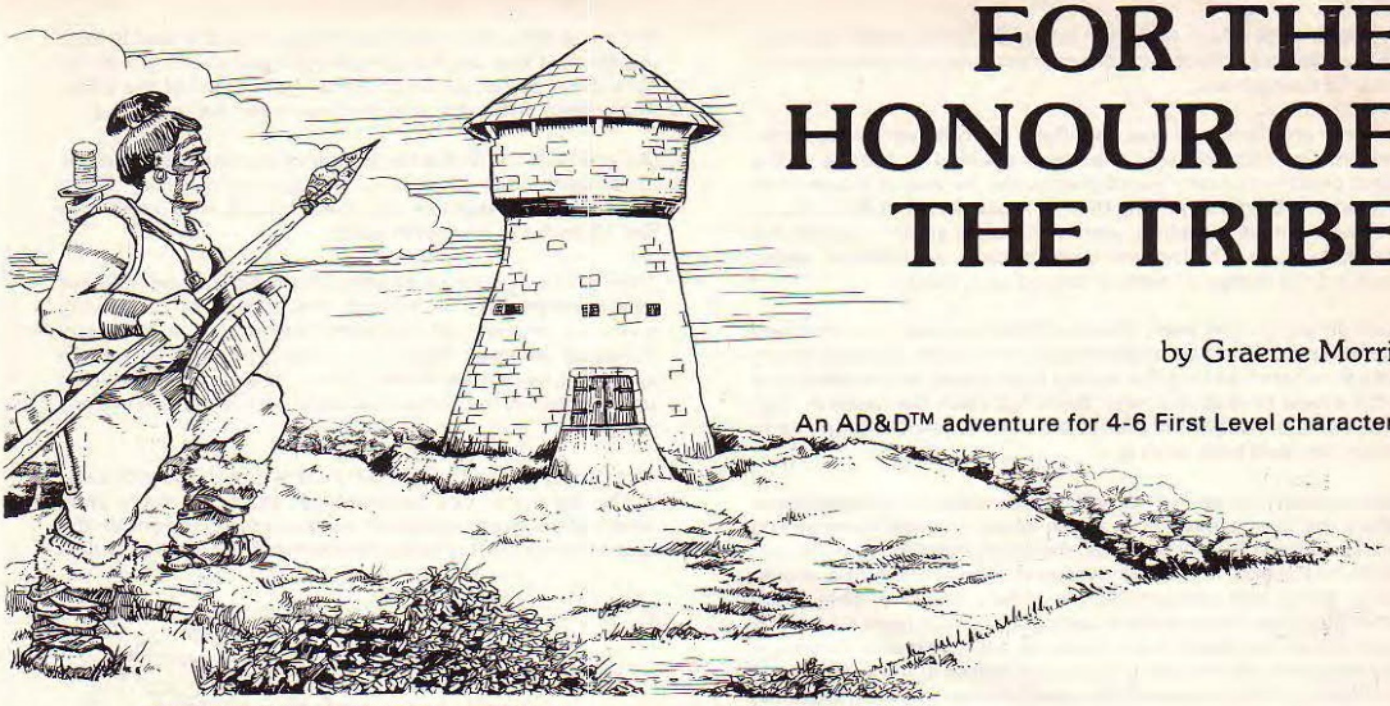


FOR THE HONOUR OF THE TRIBE

by Graeme Morris

An AD&D™ adventure for 4-6 First Level characters

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

This module has been specifically designed to serve as an introduction for players running barbarian characters for the first time. No other character classes should be used because the module has been written to suit only the special skills that distinguish these unusual warriors.

Details of the new, official Barbarian AD&D character class are given in Gary Gygax's article, 'The Big, Bad Barbarian' on page 8 of this magazine.

The module is suitable for 4-6 first level barbarians and should serve to familiarise players with the abilities of this class. Where, during the adventure, one of these skills would be useful, the appropriate part of Gary's article is indicated in brackets e.g. (see *Special Abilities: Detect Magic*).

DUNGEON MASTER'S INTRODUCTION

PAST EVENTS

The adventure takes place in a remote forest where a doughty tribe of warriors live in a simple village situated in a forest clearing. True to the nature of all their kind, they are suspicious and wary of strangers, and hostile towards all kinds of magic and those who practise it. The only spells tolerated in the village are the simple disciplines studied by their village shaman, Menke. Menke is also the guardian of the tribal symbol, a mace known as **Iron Lure**. It is around this mace that the adventure revolves.

The mace consists of a piece of lodestone attached to a wooden handle and decorated with brightly coloured feathers. Its magnetic powers have inspired deep superstitious awe in the tribespeople, who regard it as a powerful protector and ally. Menke displays it at tribal ceremonies and misguidedly believes it to be essential to the working of his clerical spells.

Ten years ago the tribe became aware that they were no longer alone in the forest. A dark and half-ruined tower that had been crumbling away in a particularly thick part of the forest some 12 miles to the north-west of the village had been re-occupied and was being rebuilt. Furthermore, hunters and gatherers of the tribe passing near the tower saw strange, half-human figures that slunk away into the undergrowth when approached.

After due consideration of the news, Burak, the chief, decided to send a delegation of his most trusted men to investigate. Their instructions were to contact the newcomers, avoiding hostility and to discover their number, their strength and their intentions. Imagine the consternation of the tribe when the delegation returned with the news that a magic user had occupied the tower! Still, Burak counselled discretion; 'Let us study the sorceror and see his heart's ways, and then decide what to do,' he said. So the tribe waited, and watched.

The magic user is called Bayn Tamarind. He had settled into the tower with a retinue consisting of a number of goblins, three charmed lieutenants (a thief, a fighter and a magic user) and his familiar (a blood hawk). Following the visit of the delegation from the village, he decided it would be to his advantage to establish friendly relations with the barbarians since, until certain of his position, he had no desire to make new enemies. Accordingly he made friendly overtures to the tribe, sending gifts to Burak and suggesting a policy of mutual respect and tolerance. To this Burak agreed, and the treaty was sealed in a ceremony during which the shaman, Menke, demonstrated the powers of the mace, **Iron Lure**.

After the ceremony the two groups kept themselves to themselves. While there was no open conflict, nothing could dispel the innate distrust that the tribe felt towards the magic user's powers, and they avoided the dark tower as far as possible.

RECENT EVENTS

It is noon on a warm, dry spring day. Some days ago, Bayn Tamarind suffered a serious disruption of his daily routine. One of his charmed lieutenants, the magic user, managed to break free of the **charm person** spell cast on him by Bayn, and made off into the forest, taking Bayn's spell book with him. With the loss of this book, Bayn's powers were much reduced, and, in a fit of fury, not unmingled with panic, he set his retinue of goblins on the heels of the fleeing fugitive.

Unfortunately for Bayn, the magic user decided to hide the heavy spell book and had continued some distance before the goblins caught up with, and, over-excited by the chase, killed him. This act displeased Bayn mightily since he had no exact idea where his spell book might be hidden and a search proved useless. However, he bethought him of the dead lieutenant's

own spell book which had been left in the tower, and found in it the spell **locate object**, which requires a piece of lodestone as a material component.

The only problem now was that Bayn did not own a lodestone, and until he remembered the mace wielded by Menke in the treaty ceremony many years previously, he was at a loss as to where to find one. Realising that he must have it at all costs, he decided to make a replica, which would be substituted for the true Iron Lure, feeling no compunction whatsoever about breaking the pledge of honour sealed with Burak.

Accordingly, in the early hours of the morning, the charmed thief crept into the barbarian village, entered the shaman's hut, stole the mace (leaving the replica in its place) and arrived back at the tower by mid-morning. Bayn fell upon the mace in high good humour and made plans to go out tomorrow morning to locate the spell book with it.

Unfortunately for Bayn, the theft was discovered by Menke even before the thief arrived back at the tower. In great outrage and consternation he went to Burak, the chief, realising that the loss of the true mace, if made known to the rest of the tribe, would cause panic and undermine the tribe's stability. They soon concluded that none of the tribespeople could have stolen the mace since **Iron Lure** is an object of such awe and reverence that all but Menke refuse to touch it. A search of the area around the shaman's hut revealed the tracks of a person wearing boots and suspicion fell on Bayn Tamarind or one of his minions as the perpetrator of the crime. Burak and Menke decided to gather together their bravest, strongest, most trustworthy tribesmen and to send them out to recover the symbol of the tribe. These tribesmen are the players in this adventure.

PLAYERS' INTRODUCTION

Initially, the DM should help players generate first level barbarian characters using the rules stipulated on page 8 of this magazine.

Each barbarian may have two of the following secondary skills which befit barbarians living in a forest: running, small craft (paddled), sound imitation, trap building. They will be skilled in the use of the following weapons: axe (hand), dagger, spear, long sword and short bow. They will begin the adventure with only the following equipment: a hand axe, a knife (dagger), a spear, a short bow, a quiver (20 arrows) and simple clothing of animal skins (no armour value). Each character will also have a piece of crude jewelry for personal adornment (e.g. amulet, necklace) worth 1-12gp, but no other money or items of value.

When the characters are all prepared the DM should read the following aloud to players:

> You are a group of young barbarian warriors, living in a forest village commanded by the chief, Burak. Your shaman, Menke wields that most powerful and awe-inspiring tribal relic, the mace Iron Lure.
>
> You are approached at noon by one of the chief's most trusted servants, and told to go to Burak's hut on a matter of utmost urgency and secrecy. On entering you find yourselves in a round, wattle and daub chamber whose ceiling is lost in cobwebs and the soot of ceremonial fires.
>
> Amidst the hushed gloom, on a dais covered by painted and beaded hides, sits the chief, Burak; his hawk-like, proud face sombre and troubled. Beside him stands Menke in his shaman's robes. He too looks grave.
>
> You approach the dais, salute the chief and, at his bidding, seat yourselves on the floor around him.

'My sons, before all else know that you must swear to take the story of this day's business with you to the grave. Be sure that you do, for it concerns the honour of the tribe. Know then, my sons, that we have been dishonoured!

'As you well know, it is ten winters since that dark master of sorcery, that wielder of illusions and tricks, Bayn Tamarind the magician, occupied the deserted tower that lies 12 miles to the north-west.

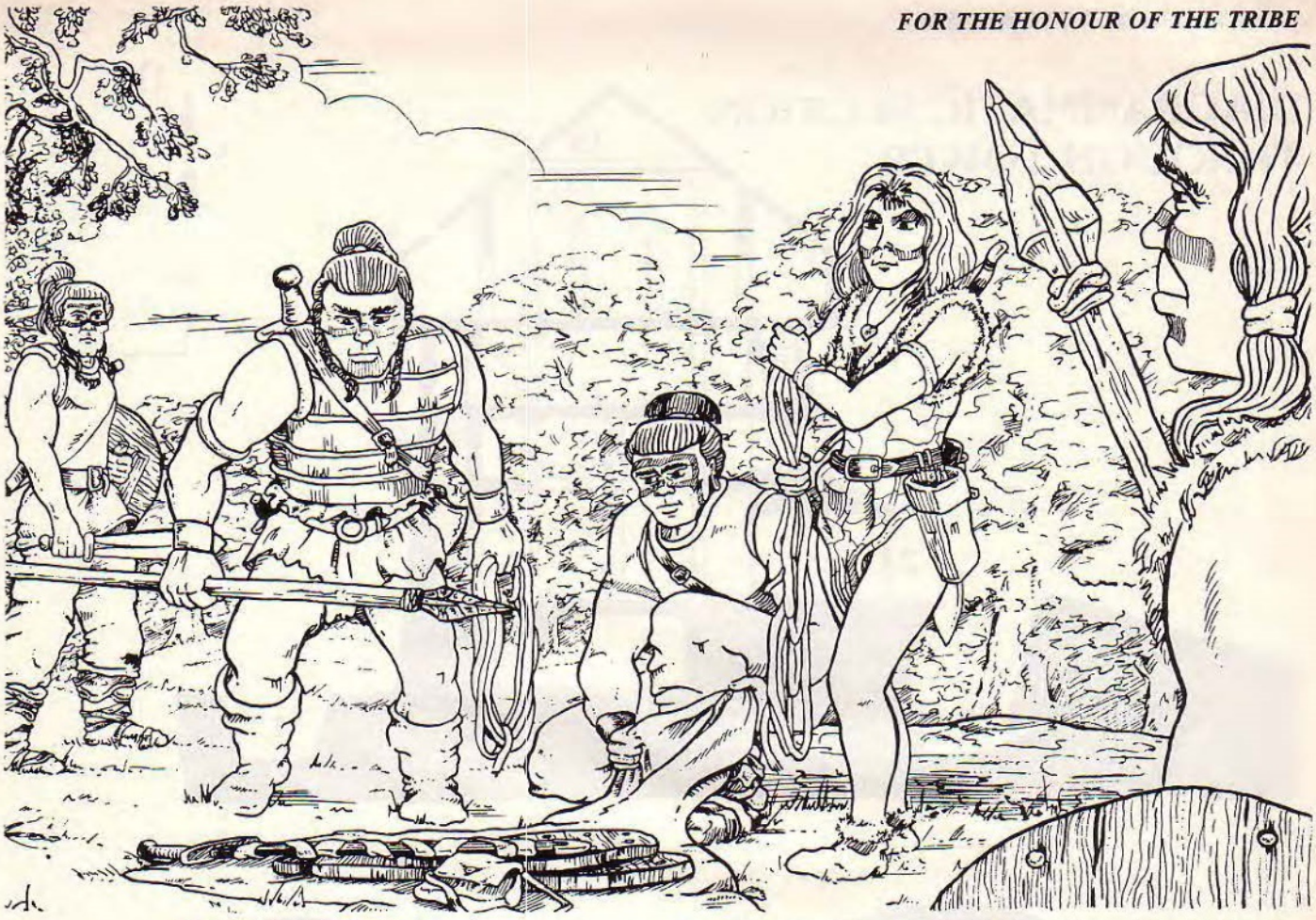
'Well we do to distrust all users of magic; but we held our peace when first he arrived, and the sorceror, having given us earnest of his good intentions in gifts and honeyed words, offered us a pact of peace which we accepted with due ritual. Since then we have lived unmolested by his dark arts and ourselves have stayed our blades.

'But now, my sons, it is in our hearts that this practitioner of the dark arts has betrayed our trust. We have been bereft of our great protector, our symbol and strength, the mace Iron Lure! It is in our hearts that the sorceror stole it

last night to use for some foul purpose of his own, leaving a poor imitation in its place. What insult is this? Does he think we are blind?

'This morning we found fresh tracks leading south into the forest from Menke's hut. Your task is this; follow the thief, recover Iron Lure and bring it safe home, speedily and in secret. If you find that the theft was indeed carried out by the sorceror or his minions, then punish him grievously. Let him know that the wrath and retribution of the Tribe fall swiftly on those who dare dishonour us! But, unless you are certain of his villainy, molest him not. A needless enemy in one such as he would be perilous indeed.

'No time must be lost. Who knows what nefarious evil he lays upon our Iron Lure even now? For your use, we have placed a store of weapons and armour in the hollow centre of the ruined oak south of the village. Go now, most speedily, equipped as if for a simple day's hunting. Take our good wishes with you and remember you do this for the honour of the tribe!'



THE ADVENTURE

A. THE CACHE OF EQUIPMENT

The tree mentioned by the chief, Burak, is well known to the characters and is out of sight of the village. Within the tree's hollow trunk are the following items of equipment:

5 small wooden shields
2 complete suits of leather armour
2 50-foot coils of rope
3 long swords, and
1 medicine bag — containing non-magical herbs, potions etc. (See *Secondary Skills: First Aid*).

The players may distribute this equipment as they wish.

B. TRACKING THE THIEF

Although the thief made some attempt to conceal his tracks, the barbarians will have no difficulty in following his route through the forest. The tracks are clearly those of a man-sized creature.

From the village the tracks lead south for 2 miles, then west for 2 miles and, finally, roughly north-west for a further 12 miles right up to the tower gate. The thief followed the same route in both directions and the barbarians will be able to distinguish the two sets of tracks.

C. OUTSIDE THE TOWER

The tower is about 100' high and about 70' in diameter at the base. It stands in the centre of a roughly circular clearing, about 400' across, atop a small hill in the forest. It is built of granite blocks with a roof of thick, stone slates.

From the edge of the clearing the barbarians will easily be able to make out the ditch around the tower, the gateway and the ramp leading up to it, and the deeply recessed windows. The shutters on the windows will also be visible. From the point where the thief's tracks enter the clearing the party will be able to see that the shutters of the eastern windows are open.

1. Ditch: The tower is completely surrounded by a steep-sided ditch 17' wide and 10' deep.

The barbarians will normally be able to jump over the ditch safely (see *Special Abilities: Leaping and Springing*). However, if the length of leap indicated is only 16' (i.e. a roll of 1 on a d6) then it is suggested that the character makes an ability check vs. Dexterity (i.e. rolls less than his or her dexterity on a d20) or slips down into the ditch taking 1 hit point of damage in the process.

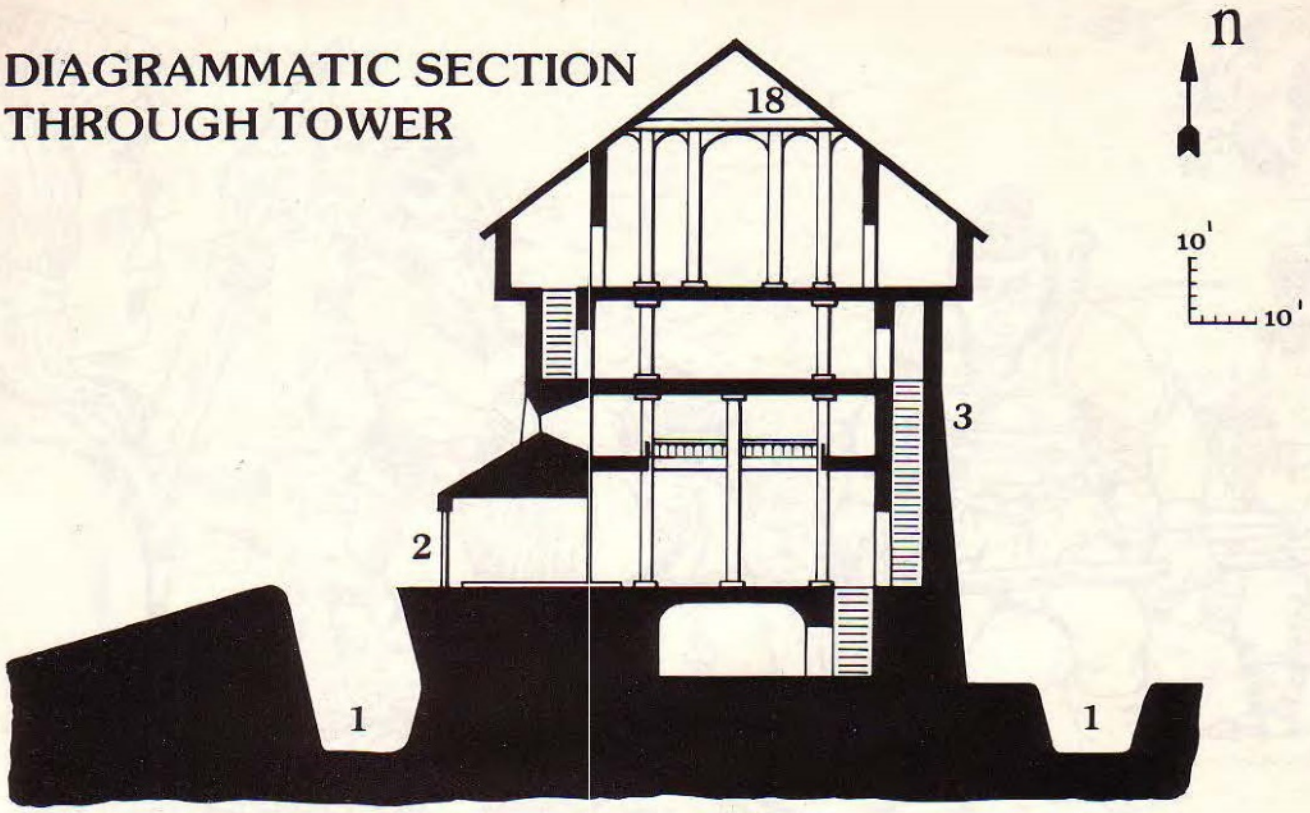
The ditch contains a total of 12 snakes which the barbarians will recognise as being poisonous. There will be 1-2 snakes within striking range when a barbarian reaches the bottom of the ditch and these will automatically have initiative in the first round. 0-1 snakes will arrive in each succeeding round that a character remains in the ditch (up to the maximum of 12).

If bitten, a character must save vs. Poison (see *Saving Throws*) or die after 5 rounds. The venom is known to the barbarians and there is a balm in the medicine bag which is used to counteract it. The chance of success is 50% plus the victim's constitution (see *Secondary Skills: First Aid*). The cure may only be attempted once for this poison, but success will remove the toxic effect of any number of bites.

SNAKES (poisonous): AC 5; MV 15"; HD 1; hp 8, 7, 7, 6, 5, 5, 4, 3, 3, 2, 2, 1; # AT 1; D 1; SA poison; Size S; AL N; xp 45+1/hp.

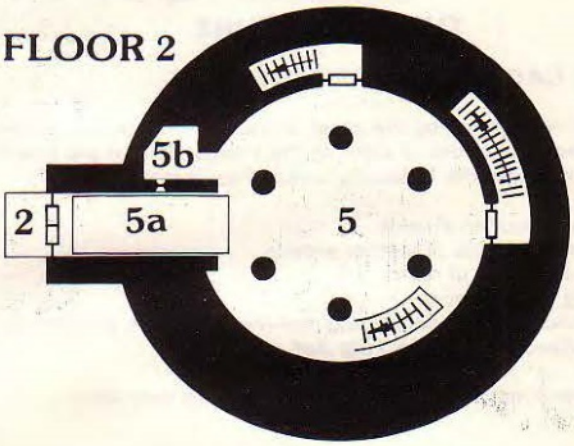
2. Gates: The gates of the tower are made of iron-bound oak and are about 9 inches thick. They hang on massive hinges, and

DIAGRAMMATIC SECTION THROUGH TOWER



FLOOR 1

FLOOR 2



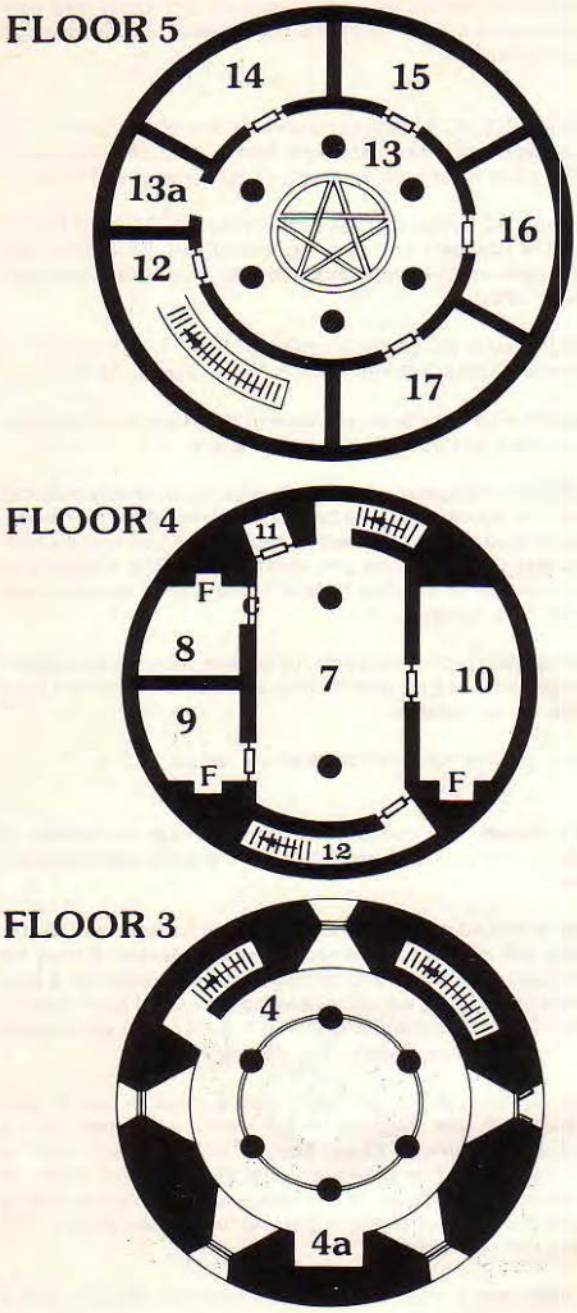
open outwards. An oaken beam on the inside holds the gates closed. When the gates are open the gap between the tower and the ramp may be spanned by a wooden bridge which slides out from the lower hall (see room 5). The barbarians will not be able to open the gates from the outside, irrespective of their strength.

3. Tower Walls and Windows: The lower walls of the tower are fairly smooth with some cracks and slope inwards slightly. The barbarians will be able to climb from the ground to the level of the windows (40 feet above the ground) in one round making only one check for success (see *Special Skills*).

No barbarian will be able to negotiate the 5-foot overhang further up the tower and the impossibility of the task will be obvious. Any attempt to climb round the overhang will automatically result in a fall (60 feet). Any attempt to attach a rope to the upper part of the tower, above the overhang, will fail.

The windows are about 4 feet square. The shutters are made of iron-bound wood and all but those of the eastern window are barred from the inside. The eastern window shutter is open. Only barbarians with 18(91) or greater strength have any chance of forcing any barred shutters open (see **PH** page 9, *'Open Doors'*). The sound made by smashing a shutter has a 10% chance of alerting the goblins in the lower hall who will then react accordingly (see room 5). Only one character may be on any outside window ledge at once.

There are supposed to be 5 goblins on watch (one at each window). However, these 5 have abandoned their posts to play



dice with one of those supposed to be moving stores (see room 5). One of the deserters forgot to seal his window before leaving.

D. INSIDE THE TOWER

Assuming that the barbarians do not make an excessive amount of noise (e.g. breaking a shutter open: see above) they will be able to enter the tower unnoticed. The thick walls and closed shutters will block out most noises so, for example, a character falling to the ground from the walls or fighting snakes in the ditch would not be heard.

4. Balcony: This 10-foot-wide balcony runs around a central, circular opening through which the lower hall (room 5) may be seen, 20 feet below. The balustrade running around the central opening is three feet high. It is built of stone and consists of a thick, horizontal rail supported by squat pillars with narrow spaces between them.

The alcove (4a) contains 12 light crossbows and 20 quivers holding 20 quarrels each.

The hall below is illuminated by torches (unlike the balcony) and the barbarians will be able to look down into it from the balustrade.

A total of 8 goblins will be seen in the hall at any one time (6 playing dice and 2 moving stores). Each round that the goblins are observed 2 will leave for the cellar (room 6) carrying stores and 2 will come up empty-handed. The barbarians will not recognise the goblins for what they are, nor will they be able to distinguish individuals easily. For each round that the goblins are observed there is a chance that they will notice the barbarians and react accordingly (see below: room 5). The chance of the barbarians being seen is 2% per barbarian per round (non-cumulative) if the barbarians are looking through the balustrade. The chance is doubled if they are looking over it.

Any attempt at stealth by the barbarians will ensure that they are not heard. However, any deliberate attempt to attract attention will succeed.

10 rounds after the barbarians enter the tower, the goblin who left the shutter open will remember it, leave the dice game and come upstairs...

5. Lower Hall: This area is illuminated by torches. There is a thin layer of soiled straw on the stone-flagged floor. A space has been cleared in the straw where 6 goblins are gambling with dice. A further 6 goblins are transporting stores from this room to the cellar below (6). Each round 2 goblins descend with stores and 2 come up.

If unnoticed, the barbarians will again surprise on a roll 1, 2 or 3 on a d6 if they attack the goblins (see *Special Abilities: Surprise*).

The main concern of the goblins, when they discover the intruders, will be to flee upstairs to the fighter in the upper hall (room 9). If engaged in melee they will only flee if 6 or more of their number have been killed. If not actually engaged (e.g. if only fired upon with arrows or if they see or hear the party) they will always flee upstairs after recovering from surprise (if any).

Note that 2 goblins will arrive from the cellar in the round after combat starts and 2 in the round after that.

12 GOBLINS: AC 6; MV 6"; HD 1-1; hp (dice players) 6, 5, 5, 3, 2, 1 (store shifters) 7, 6, 5, 4, 2, 1; # AT 1; D 1-6 (short sword); AL LE; Size S; xp 10+1/hp.

VALUABLES: Each goblin has 8sp. The 2 dice are cut blood-which stones and are worth 15gp each, the stakes in the game total 13sp. The 7 hp goblin has a silver-gilt neck-band worth 10gp.

Also in this room are the following stores, ready to be moved downstairs: 12 casks of water, 6 casks of ale, 2 casks of wine, 10 sacks of flour, 5 sacks of coal, 1 sack of salt, 13 faggots of fire-wood, 20 bundles of torches and 4 animal carcasses (deer). Total value 83gp.

From the western part of the hall a passage (5a) leads to the gates which are barred on the inside (see 2: above). The floor of the passage is covered by what appears (to the barbarian eye) to be a wooden platform about a foot high. This is the bridge which may be slid out to span the ditch when the gates are open. The bridge is moved my means of a large wheel in the side-chamber (5b) which sets in motion a series of pulleys and gears. The barbarians will be unfamiliar with this sort of mechanism.

6. Cellar: Depending on events above (room 5) there may be 2 or even 4 goblins here when the barbarians enter. The cellar is lit by torches.

The cellar contains: 9 empty casks, 2 casks of ale, 12 sacks of flour, 9 faggots, 10 jars of oil (each is the equivalent of 5 flasks), 10 50-foot coils or rope, 15 planks of wood, a box of tools (axes, hammers, nails, saws, augers, whetstone, drawknife, chisels etc.), 10 bundles of torches, 10 sacks of vegetables. Total value 106gp.

7. Upper Hall: There is a table in this room (about 15 x 4 feet) running lengthways between the two pillars. Along either side of the table stands a row of 9 stools. There is a high-backed chair at either end.

In the room is the magic user's charmed fighter-lieutenant, sharpening his longsword with a whetstone.

If the combat in the hall lasts for more than one round the fighter will hear it. Accordingly he will have called the female goblins out of the kitchen (room 10) and will be ready to fight by the time the barbarians arrive. The fighter and the goblins will not go down the stairs to investigate unless there has been no sound from below for 6 turns.

If the combat below lasts for only one round then the fighter will not hear it and the barbarians will have their usual chance of surprising him 1-3 on d6, see *Special Abilities: Surprise*). The female goblins will not be in the hall but will come out of the kitchen in the second full round of combat.

The fighter and any goblins present will fight to the death.

The thief-lieutenant will be inside his room (8) when the barbarians arrive. He will be alerted by any sound of combat in the upper hall and will be able to observe it through a small peep-hole in the concealed door (the barbarians will not be able to detect this door until the thief opens it). At an appropriate moment during the combat (or after it if the fight ends quickly) the thief will drink one dose of his **potion of invisibility** (see room 8), open the door and make a back-stab attack with his poisoned dagger. Under all but exceptional circumstances he will be able to attack a barbarian from behind by using his stealth and invisibility. Thereafter he will fight to the death with his longsword, since the dagger venom will only affect one victim.

The thief's victim has a 5% chance of sensing the back-stab attempt (see *Special Abilities: Back Attack*) which then becomes a normal attack. Also barbarians have a good saving throw vs. Poison (see *Saving Throws*). The poison will cause death after 4 rounds if the saving throw fails. The barbarians will recognise the poison if they examine the dagger and they have a herbal antidote in the medicine bag (see *Secondary Skills: First Aid*). Neutralising this particular poison takes a full round and can only be attempted once. The chance of success is 50% plus the victim's constitution.

FIGHTER: level 3; AC 4 (chain and shield); MV 9"; hp 20;# AT 1; D 3-10 (**longsword +1** and strength bonus); AL CN (charmed); Size M; SA +2 to hit (+1 for weapon, +1 for strength), 110 xp.

THIEF: level 3; AC 6 (leather plus dexterity bonus; MV12"; hp 11; # AT 1; D 1-4 (dagger) or 1-8 (long sword); AL LE (charmed); Size M; SA back-stab (+4 with double damage), poison on dagger (see above), 128xp.

GOBLINS (female): AC 6; MV 6"; HD 1-1; hp 5, 4, 4, 3, 3;# AT 1; D 1-4 (miscellaneous kitchen items); AL LE; Size S; xp 5+1/hp.

VALUABLES: The only items of value in the room are 3 pewter serving platters on the table (value 4gp each).

The fighter has a **longsword +1** which is quite obviously magical and should be shunned by the barbarians (see *Magic, Armour, Shields and Weaponry*). In a belt pouch he has 5gp and a small jade statuette (of a dancing girl) worth 50gp. The barbarians would be unwise to use the fighter's chain mail armour (see *Character Class Table II*).

The thief has no items of value on his person with the exception of the longsword, dagger and leather armour, all of which may be used by the barbarians.

The female goblins have no items of any value.

8. Thief's Room: The contents of this room are as follows: a small hearth with a pile of wood beside it; a cot; a table; a chair and a chest.

The chest is locked with a combination mechanism which the barbarians will not be able to recognise or operate. It may be smashed open (requires 10hp damage). When smashed, a trap within the chest will be set off, releasing a cloud of acid vapour. All within 10 feet of the chest will take 1-8 hit points of damage (halved if they save vs. Breath, see *Saving Throws*).

The chest contains (from the top down): a cloak; a pair of soft leather boots; 2 fine daggers (60gp each); a blanket and a wooden box containing 22gp, 5pp, a silver brooch with a dragon's head inlaid in green enamel (180gp) and a vial of dagger venom. The venom is the same as that on the thief's dagger and there is sufficient in the vial for 2 applications. The barbarians will recognise it.

On the table are a vial, a book, a mechanical device and a number of fine tools. The vial is half empty and contains one dose of a **potion of invisibility**. The barbarians should shun this sorcerors brew, especially if they detect its magical aura (see *Special Abilities: Detect Magic*).

The mechanical device is a lock/trap mechanism which the thief is making to be fitted to a chest. If touched, it will be triggered but it is harmless. The book is a manual describing the theory of lock and trap making (value 15gp — only barbarians who can read will be able to discover the book's contents) and the tools are a specialised set of thief's tools (value 50gp). The latter two items may only be sold to a specialist buyer.

9. Fighter's Room: The room contains the following: a hearth with a pile of wood beside it; a cot; a wooden, human-sized dummy; a chest and a weapons rack.

The chest is not locked and has no trap. It contains (from the top downwards): a cloak, a bandage roll, a vial (**potion of healing**,

one dose), another vial (muscle liniment, the barbarians will recognise this), a third vial (oil for weapons and armour, value 1gp) and a bag containing 137gp in assorted coins (total weight 300gp equivalent).

In the weapons rack are the following: a composite short bow, a quiver with 20 arrows (5 silver-tipped), a normal longsword, a wooden sword, a sword weighted with lead (very heavy) and a set of dumb-bells. The fighter uses the dummy, the dumb-bells and the wooden and weighted swords for training purposes.

10. Kitchen: There is an open hearth in the southern wall where a cauldron (1gp) of stew hangs over a roaring coal fire. Next to the hearth is an oven where bread is baking, and the room is filled with its aroma. Strings of herbs, mushrooms and onions hang over the fire and there is an opened sack of coal beside it.

The kitchen is dominated by a large, central table. On this are a chopping block, odd pieces of meat and bone, a stack of wooden platters, cups and bowls, 20 pewter spoons, 2 jugs, a salt box and a large piece of dough (total value 2gp). The knives, choppers etc. were taken by the female goblins for use as weapons in the melee in the upper hall (room 7).

On the western wall there is a rack of copper pots and pans. Below this stand three casks (all open, containing water, wine and ale) each with a dipper, and an opened sack of flour. These pans and provisions are worth 6gp in all.

11. Garderobe (latrine): A foul place, not worthy of description.

12. Stairs up to the Magic User's Quarters: Immediately any of the barbarians starts up the stairs a **magic mouth** will be activated and will speak the following words (in common):

> 'So, you have at last dared to intrude into my domain. Long have I awaited your coming and long have I prepared a welcome suitable for such as yourselves. Make peace with your pagan gods, for soon you shall be with them...'

The door into the magic user's hall (13) at the top of the stairs is **wizard locked** and will have a magical aura (see *Special Abilities: Detect Magic*). The barbarians may be able to force it open (see **PH**, page 9; *Open Doors*), otherwise it must be smashed (requires 20hp of damage).

13. The Magic User's Hall: This is a lofty, circular room with a conical ceiling. Six stone pillars support this ceiling and surround a white pentagram inlaid in the black stone of the floor. The room's only occupants are the magic user, Bayn Tamarind, and his familiar, a blood hawk. There are no furnishings.

BAYN TAMARIND (magic user): level 6; AC 7 (dexterity bonus); MV 12"; hp 24 (including +4 from the familiar); # AT 1; D 1-4 (dagger); AL NE; Size M; 494xp. He has memorised the following spells:

first level: **magic missile** (3 at d4+1, range 12", casting time 1 seg), **burning hands** (6hp damage, casting time 1 seg), **read magic, enlarge** (range 3", duration 6 turns, casting time 1 seg).
second level: **mirror image** (casting time 2 seg), **locate object**.
third level: **monster summoning** I (range 3", casting time 3 seg), **phantasmal force** (range 14", area of effect 14 sq. inches, casting time 3 seg).

BLOOD HAWK (familiar): AC 7; MV 24"; HD 1+1; hp 4; # AT 1; D 1-4/1-4/1-6; AL N; Size S; 28xp. If the blood hawk is killed, the magic user will suffer 8 points of damage.

The magic user's tactics for his defence will be as follows:

(i) When the **magic mouth** on the stairs warns him of the approach of intruders, Bayn will cast **monster summoning I** into the centre of the room. The spell will cause 6 giant rats to appear in the centre of the room at the start of the third round thereafter. The rats will vanish when the spell expires 8 rounds later.

GIANT RATS: AC 7; MV 12"; HD 1/2; hp 4, 3, 3, 2, 2, 1; # AT 1; D1-3; SA disease (5%); AL N(E); Size S; xp 7+1/hp.

The rats will attack the barbarians and fight to the death without any fear, even of fire. Note that Menke, the barbarian tribal shaman, is capable of casting a **cure disease** spell. The barbarians may be able to detect that the rats are magical (see *Special Abilities: Detect Magic*).

(ii) Next, Bayn will move into the alcove (13a) and cast a **phantasmal force** spell. The **wizard locked** door will prevent the barbarians from entering the room before he has had the chance to cast this second spell.

Bayn will use the **phantasmal force** to produce the illusion that the wall continues across the entrance to the alcove. However, he will still be able to see into the main part of the room. The barbarians may be able to detect the presence of the illusion (see *Special Abilities: Detect Illusion*).

(iii) Once the rats are either dead or dispelled, or if the illusory wall is discovered, the magic user will himself be forced to fight. If possible, he will wait until the most auspicious moment before revealing his presence. Bayn will allow the **phantasmal force** to disappear and then cast spells in the following order: **mirror image**, **magic missile** and **burning hands**. After this he will use his dagger.

Immediately the magic user is discovered, the blood hawk will attack the barbarians, diving down from the nest (18) where it has been hiding. It will continue to attack even if its master is killed.

VALUABLES: The magic user is carrying 2 ordinary daggers and has 2 belt pouches. One pouch contains 6 gems (10gp x2, 30gp, 50gp, 100gp, 200gp) and a key (to the chest in the white room (17)). The other contains the material components for his spells.

14. The Magic User-Lieuntenant's Room: Since the desertion of the magic user-lieutenant this room has been stripped of all valuables. The room contains only an empty (unlocked) chest, a bare cot, a table and 2 chairs.

15. Bayn Tamarind's Room: Bayn has austere tastes. The floor, walls and ceiling of this room are all black, relieved only by a number of painted gold stars (no value).

In the centre of the room is a bed with black sheets. Beside the bed are a hubble-bubble pipe and a ceramic jar. The hubble-bubble is decorated with semi-precious stones and is worth 50gp. The jar contains a narcotic herb which is magical (see *Special Abilities: Detect Magic*). Smoking a pipeful of this has the following effects: intelligence +4, dexterity -4, strength -6, which last for 1 hour. There are 10 pipefuls in the jar (worth 100gp, but the barbarians should shun it).

16. Bayn Tamarind's Workroom: There is a long table in the centre of this room with 2 stools beside it. There is also a lectern near the southern wall and two shelves on the northern wall.

On the table are the mace, **Iron Lure**, and a wooden box (12"x6"x6"). The box is neither locked nor trapped and contains a number of pieces of parchment, 6 fine quills, a penknife, a small pot of fine sand and a small pot of ink (total value 20gp but the barbarians will probably disregard it).

On the lectern is the lieutenant magic user's spell book. The barbarians will automatically recognise it as an instrument of the 'black arts' (and should disregard or destroy it).

On the shelves are an amazing jumble of pots, jars, boxes and packets containing material components for spells. Amongst these are the following items of value: incense (100gp), 2 pearls (100gp), and an amber rod (30gp). None of these is magical.

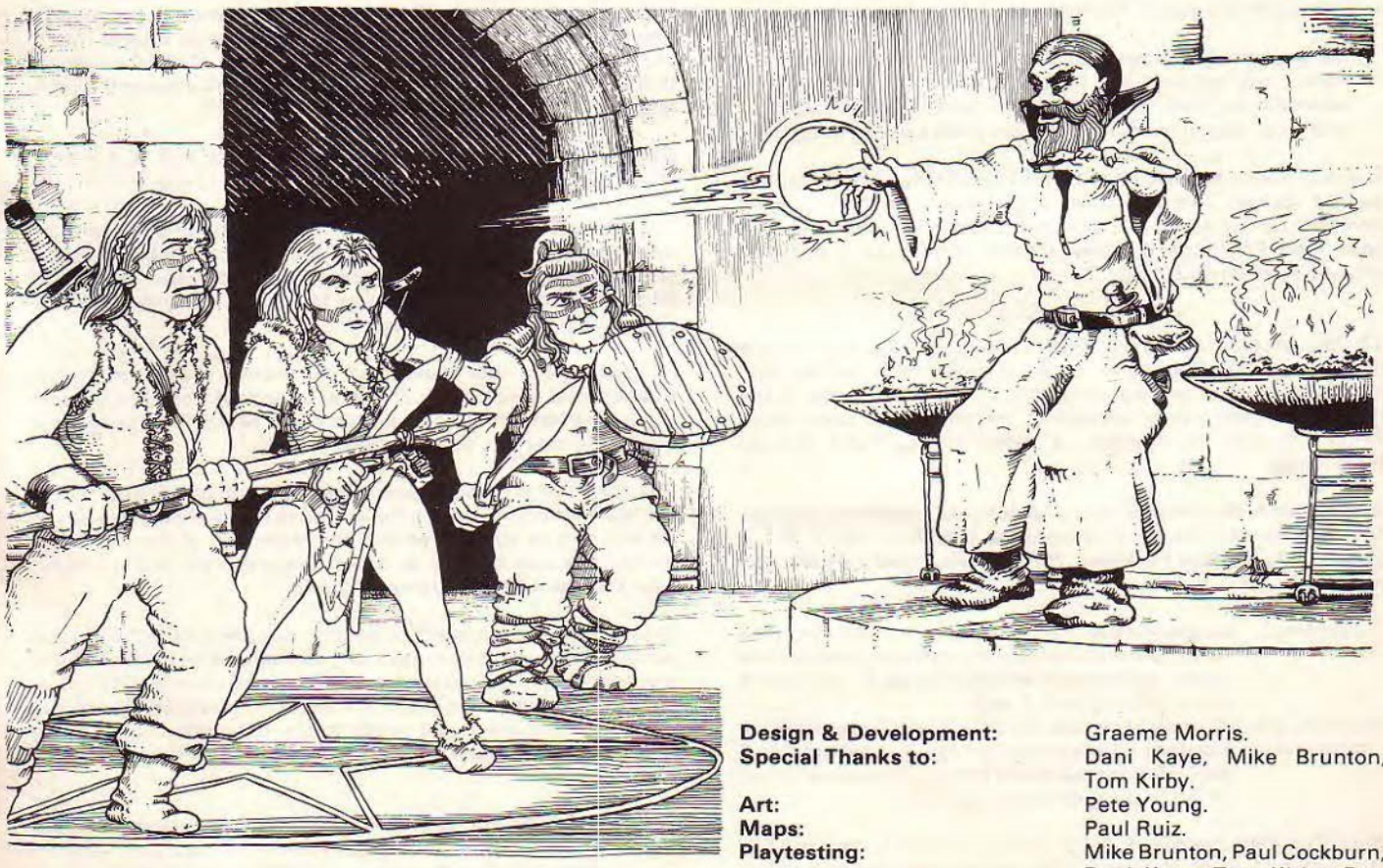
17. The White Room: The walls, floor and ceiling of this room are plain white. It is empty except for a chest made of pale wood bound with polished steel.

The chest is locked (key in Bayn's belt pouch, see room 13) but it is not trapped and may be smashed open (requires 15hp damage). It contains 8000 copper pieces enchanted with **fool's gold** (actual value 40gp). This stock of 'gold pieces' is used by Bayn Tamarind to impress and bribe the gullible.

The copper pieces retain the semblance of gold so long as they remain in the room. Once removed from it, however, they will revert to their natural form after 6 hours. Both the room and the 'gold pieces' are magical (see *Special Abilities: Detect Magic*) and the barbarian chief would be greatly displeased if the party carried such 'foul sorcery' back to the village!

18. Blood Hawk's Nest: This is high up in the angle between the roof and one of the cross-beams between the pillars. It is not visible from floor level but may be easily found if looked for by, for example, climbing the pillars.

The nest contains a gold ring set with a gem (value 150gp) and a necklace of pearls (value 300gp).



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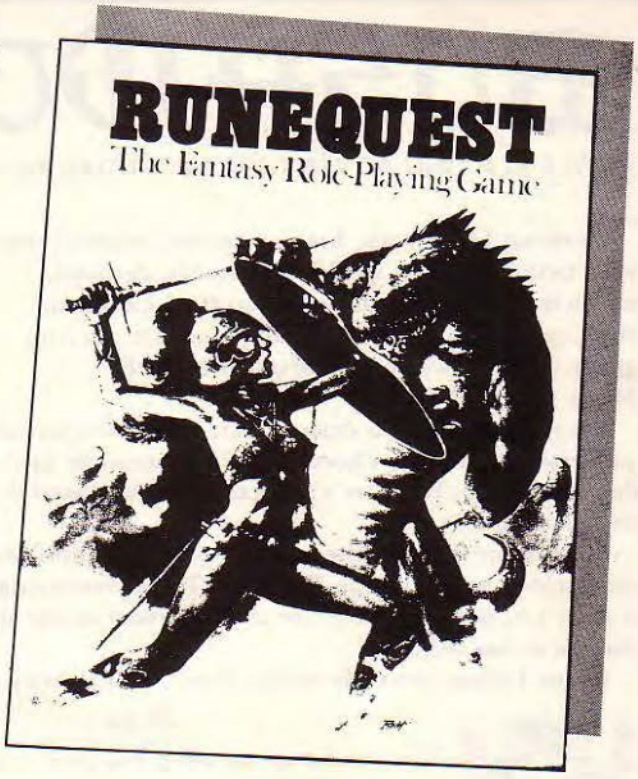

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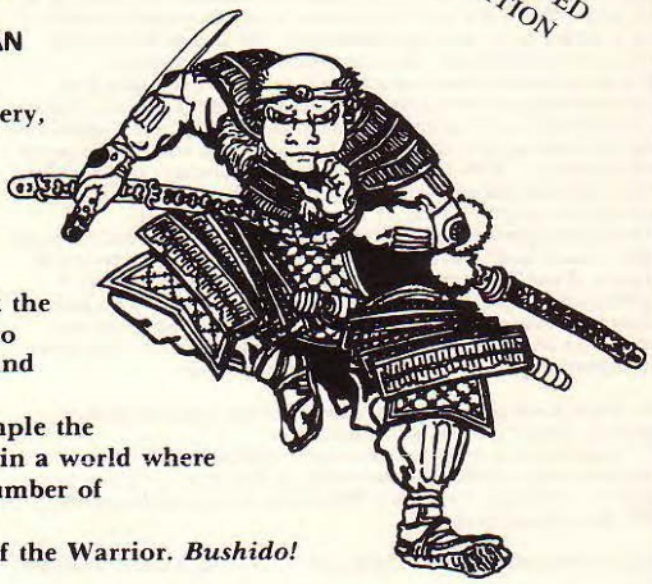

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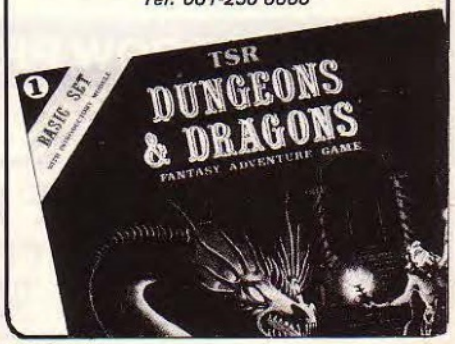

SPECIAL PA OFFERS

Please note that the following offers are available **only** to members of the D&D® Players Association. Details of the PA and how to join are given on page 33 of this magazine.

BARGAIN BASEMENT

The Bargain Basement (lair of the infamous Karen) is the place where we consign all the stock which, for some reason or other, can no longer be sold as 'perfect'. The degree of imperfection varies from a missing shrink-wrap to the lack of a page in a module, for example. The items all have two things in common, however, they are all on sale at amazingly reduced prices and none of them is rubbish.

PA members can obtain an up-to-date list of available Bargain Basement items by sending an S.A.E. to Bargain Basement at the address given below. Don't forget to quote your PA membership number.

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The 'R series' AD&D™ adventure modules are produced by the RPGA™ organisation in the USA and are available in the UK only to PA members. Each of the modules was designed for use in a GEN CON® tournament and is suitable for normal campaign play as well as having extra details and pre-rolled characters for tournament-style use.

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A 32-page module designed for 5 characters of 5th level. Price £2.00, post free.

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A 32-page module designed for 5-8 characters of level 5-9. Price £2.00, post free.

In the lonely town of Northending, the council has called the paladin Athelstan to their aid. The fabulous artifact known as the Egg of the Phoenix has vanished; stolen by evil beings.

'MILL DAYS'

Mill Days are Saturday gaming sessions which take place here at the Mill in Cambridge. This year we are planning to hold about half a dozen covering a variety of games. The next will be on Saturday, 28th May.

Mill Days are open to PA members only. There is no fee but places must be booked in advance. For details, write to 'Players Association Mill Days' at the address below. Please enclose an SAE.

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These are half-inch diameter brushed steel badges carrying our Dragon's-Head logo. They will double as a lapel badge or tie-pin and will discreetly identify you as a player and PA member. Price £0.95 each, post free.

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It always happens. No sooner does a magazine come to an end than its back issues become collector's items. PA members can obtain back issues of PANs 1-12 for £0.50 each or £5.00 for a set of 12, post free.

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D&D® PLAYERS ASSOCIATION NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER
OF THE BRITISH
DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®
PLAYERS ASSOCIATION

PAN PIPINGS

This issue, it will not have escaped your notice that the new barbarian character class is from the pen of Gary Gygax and is described as 'official'. Do I detect a sharp intake of breath? I fear that I do, since the word 'official' is the equivalent of a fireball under the collar to some people. Fear not, I am not about to walk into that old argument. Today I'm in the business of giving information to those who are interested, rather than stirring up those who prefer a good shouting match to a good game.

Since the AD&D™ game achieved stability in the form of the first three hardbacks in 1979, the DEITIES & DEMIGODS™ Cyclopedia and FIEND FOLIO® Tome have provided extra scope for the game rather than change. Beyond these, we had to content ourselves with the rules additions/changes published in fanzines and other hobby publications, but recently new stuff from Lake Geneva (and Gary Gygax in particular) has been seeing the light of day.

In the UK, the first inkling that most people will have had of this new trend was in August last year, with the release of Module S4 which included a booklet of new spells, magical items and monsters. Somewhat before this, DRAGON™ Magazine started to carry a series of official rules additions. While a few of you will be quite familiar with these, the circulation of DRAGON Magazine in the UK is relatively small and IMAGINE™ magazine is a much better vehicle for putting the new material before the British public.

At present, the plan is for IMAGINE magazine to catch up rapidly on its American cousin so as to reach a point where new material can be published simultaneously (as far as possible) in the US and UK magazines. I intend to devote the remainder of this editorial to a summary of the kind of thing to expect.

CHARACTER CLASSES. Well, there's the barbarian, of course, but that is by no means all. In the wind are the mystic (a cleric sub-class, specialising in prediction), the cavalier (a knightly/noble sub-class of fighter), the savant (magic-users specialising in arcane knowledge), the mountebank (a thief sub-class with a preference for the sort of thievery which goes on outside the dungeon), the acrobat (a thief 'split class' of the running/leaping variety), the jester (an entirely separate character class) and the Grand Druid (a 15th level superman). Nuf said?

WEAPONS. Ever wanted to use a garotte, a lasso or a whip? How about a blowpipe or a spiked buckler?

SPELLS. Illusionists can look forward to 26 new spells ranging from levels 1 to 7, and there are 62 (levels 1 to 9) for magic-users!

CANTRIPS. These are my favourites. Cantrips are 0 level spells learnt by magic-users and illusionists before they go on to the dizzy heights of first level magic. Cantrips are very quick to cast, but the best thing about them is that you can memorise four of them in the place of one measly first level spell. Contemplate for one moment, if you will, spells with names such as untie, curdle, belch, sneeze, tweek, exterminate (useful for flies etc., the verbal component is 'zzzt'), nod and scratch. Just imagine the scene; the paladin (charisma 18) is ordering a drink from the landlord's daughter when you hit him with a wink spell.... !

Graeme Morris

DISPEL CONFUSION

Dispel Confusion is a question and answer column intended to help hobby gamers overcome problems they have had with game rules.

At present, Dispel Confusion will restrict itself to games produced by TSR Hobbies, and while the answers we come up with may not be fully 'official', we at least have contact with the game designers themselves. In future, we hope to expand the range of subjects covered to games other than TSR products by getting answers from those who make and design them.

All we need are the questions, and that is where you come in. Good answers need good questions, so send your queries to:

Dispel Confusion (Players Association), IMAGINE Magazine, TSR Hobbies (UK) Ltd., The Mill, Rathmore Road, CAMBRIDGE CB1 4AD.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® and ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® games

Q. What are the effects on armour class of wearing magical protection devices in combination, or wearing such devices with armour? (Advanced)

A. The cumulative effects of magical devices and armour are summarised below:

Potion of Invulnerability. AC bonus always applies. The effect is cumulative with other devices.

Ring of Protection. No AC bonus if magical armour is worn. The effect is cumulative with other devices (except other rings of protection).

Bracers of Defence. No AC bonus if any armour is worn. The effect is cumulative with other protective magical devices.

Cloak of Displacement. AC bonus always applies. Effects are cumulative with other magical devices.

Cloak of Protection. No AC bonus if magical armour, metal armour or shield are used. Effects are cumulative with leather armour or other magical devices.

Q. Can a magic-user wear armour and use a sword if they are magical and he or she made them? (Basic/Advanced)

A. In both games, magic-users cannot use any weaponry other than from a restricted list (a dagger only in the Basic game, and a dagger, dart or staff in the Advanced game).

Although in the Advanced game magical items can be constructed by a magic-user, including swords, this does not imply the ability or the inclination to use such items.

In both games magic-users are intellectual types who have dedicated themselves to the powers of the mind. Learning to cast spells is a time-consuming occupation requiring total devotion, and magic-users do not have the time or the inclination when they are young (the years before they begin adventuring) to practise swordswinging. As a result, they leave this activity to the mayhem specialists — fighters.

Elves (in the Basic game) and non-human fighter/magic-users (in the Advanced game) can use any weaponry and armour and cast spells. This is because their longer childhoods and lifetimes allow greater diversity in training. They also have a different philosophy of life. These character types might seem to have better options available to them, but their progression is slower, and results in a less powerful end product, than their fully specialised human colleagues.

Q. While using a phantasmal force spell, is the caster only allowed to create the illusion of one 'thing'? (Advanced)

A. The caster, be he a magic user or an illusionist, can only create the illusion of any one thing with this spell. Furthermore, the spell caster cannot set this spell in motion and then move on to cast a second spell — he must maintain his concentration all the time.

Q. Do constitution bonuses apply after a character reaches 'name level' in a particular class? (Advanced)

TURNBULL TALKING

In the course of my meanderings in the last issue, I had cause to heap some scorn on the shoulders of those who, when they should know better, accidentally or even deliberately misunderstand and misinterpret what the gaming hobby is about. One point, indeed, which I see I missed, is to emphasise that this is a *hobby*, a very absorbing and time-consuming business, in the most pleasurable sense of the expression, and far from the occasional and circumstantial dipping into the game box. The hobby based on the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game has been probably the most addictive of all and likely to remain so — because of the very nature of the game, and more of this in due course. But it certainly does come as a considerable surprise to some to discover the amount of time devoted to this hobby, when they think the word 'game' really means an occasional messing-about with the family at Christmas.

But it does occur to me that there may well be readers of this magazine who, because they have only arrived on the scene fairly recently, have not yet themselves grasped quite how important this hobby could become to them — the magnitude of the tiger they have by the tail, so to speak. After all, role-playing games are called *games* and indeed, from a superficial look at the box, they look like games. Why are they different and in what respects? What is it that has made the role-playing game phenomenon, and in particular the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game phenomenon, such a pyrotechnic one?

It's probably easier to answer this question by saying what these games are not. That they are not conventional games, in the traditional sense of the word, is immediately obvious as soon as the box is opened. Where is the gaming board? Where are the plastic tokens which one moves around according to the throw of a die? Where are the packs of cards? Where is the money (an important element on family games)? Even superficially, the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game looks nothing on earth like a game.

The more the role-playing game is investigated, rather like peeling skins off an onion, the more apparent the differences become. Role-playing games are not competitive — the players neither compete against each other, nor against the games master (or Dungeon Master). Instead the players co-operate in competing against an environment which the Dungeon Master has created — created for their adventuring and for their fun and enjoyment. Out of the window goes the concept of winning and losing; no player has to 'wait for his turn to come around' since every player is actively involved all the time; to all intents and purposes the game can be infinitely longer in play — or at least as long as the parties want it to be.

One need peel very few skins off the onion before it becomes quite evident that what the newcomer has discovered is an entirely new concept in gaming — not simply a variant on the old theme. Some years ago, someone who undertook a very considerable and learned study of games over the history of civilization

A. Once a character has ceased to gain hit dice when progressing in level the constitution bonus (or penalty) ceases to be applied. The bonus specifically applies to hit dice, not to hit points.

Q. Will water-affecting spells (eg. **lower water**) affect water in a form other than liquid — fog or ice?

A. No. The very use of the word water means only the liquid form will be affected. Fog and ice must be dealt with through other spells.

Q. Why are swords the only weapons which can be intelligent and have the special abilities which go with that intelligence? (Advanced)

A. Magic swords are the only weapons in the Dungeon Masters Guide which have the special abilities and intelligence rules applied to them, with the option to apply these to magic scimitars and the like if the campaign has an Eastern/Arabic flavour.

This is simply a traditional part of the background upon which the game is based — nearly all heroes tend to use magical swords. Two examples should illustrate this, King Arthur has the sword Excalibur, and Elric uses/is used by Stormbringer.

STAR FRONTIERS™ adventure game

Q. I read through the rulebook, and couldn't find anything about spaceships. Where are they, can't characters travel in space?

A. At the moment characters can travel in space, but have to use commercial spaceliners. The second part of the STAR FRONTIERS game system is currently being developed in America and will cover spaceship design, combat and role-playing in space. We are hoping to see the new rules this year.

TOP SECRET™ game

Q. What are the effects of the thermite bomb given in the equipment list?

A. Thermite bombs do not explode but burn for 5 — 10 seconds, much like magnesium, temporarily blinding viewers and melting through one inch of plate metal or asbestos walling, thereby usually destroying the contents of a safe or other heavy container.

concluded that games could be broken down into five distinct categories: race, war, and so forth. The DUNGEONS & DRAGONS and other role-playing games do not fall into any of these categories — what we have witnessed in the last decade is quite literally the first major development in gaming for centuries.

One more aspect occurs to me. In every other game I know there is a set of rules, and these sets of rules tie the players into a certain pattern of actions. Moving a chess rook diagonally may sound a good idea but it is contrary to the rules, as is going anti-clockwise round a board of Monopoly (unless one of those cards tells you to do so). In role-playing games, almost the contrary is true. The rules do not force players into particular patterns of action — rather the players, by their actions, force the rules. In turn this means that no set of rules can be written which would cover all possible eventualities which the players may dictate through their characters. The game is determined by the players, and not vice versa, and the massive rule books which the uninitiated believe to betoken an extremely complex game represent quite the opposite — they are reference books designed to cover some of the more common eventualities which might arise.

'What?!' shrieks the newcomer, 'You start off by telling us this game isn't really a game, then go on to say that it doesn't have much by the way of equipment, and then finally wind up by saying the rules do not cover all eventualities. What sort of game is this?'

Exactly my point. Exactly the point which the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game enthusiast welcomes and the one which tends to confuse those who haven't had the chance to experience the fun this can give. The game thrives on its lack of rules, its lack of equipment, the lack of any necessity to learn more than a few simple facts, its lack of competition, its indeterminate length, its free-for-all no-holds-barred style. Try it. You will enjoy it.

Don Turnbull

PA MEMBERSHIP

The PA is a club for all players of role playing games particularly the D&D® and AD&D™ games. Since it was founded in 1981, the PA has become the country's largest D&D club, and now has this 4-page section in IMAGINE™ magazine. The benefits of membership include:

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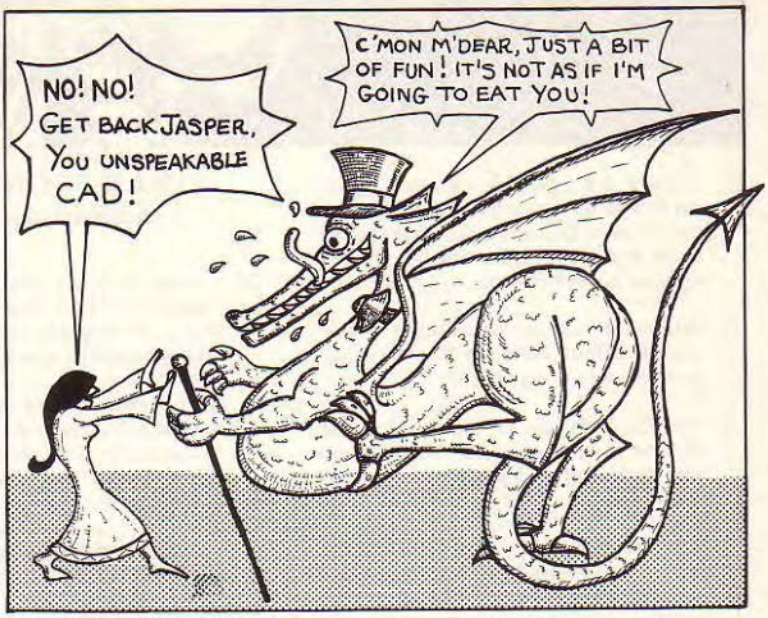
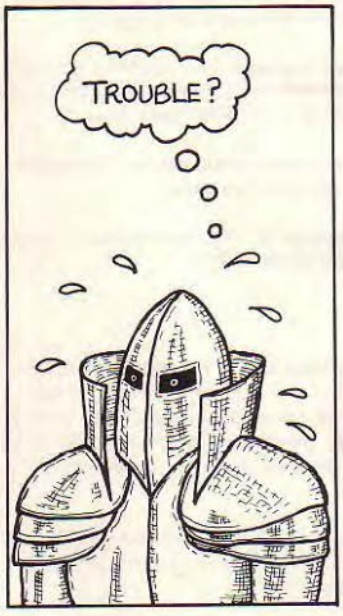
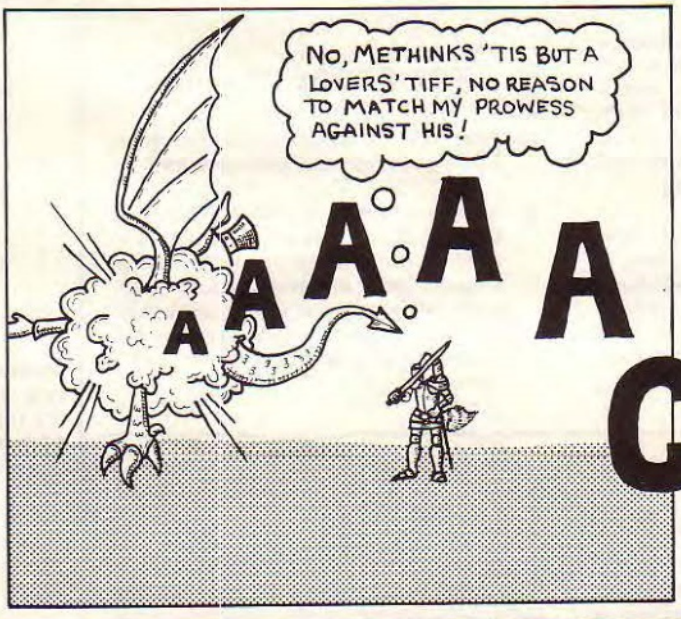
RUBIC OF MOGGEDON

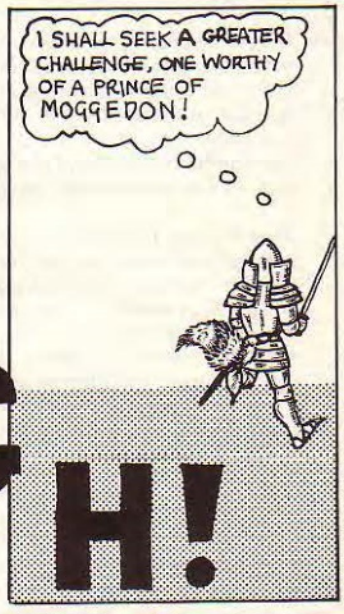
LONG AND LONELY WERE THE WANDERINGS OF THE EXILED PRINCE; FULL OFT DID HIS MIND DWELL LONGINGLY ON FAR MOGGEDON; THOUGH IN TRUTH IT WAS FATED THAT MANY A SLOW SUMMER WAS TO PASS ERE HE MIGHT REJOICE HIS HEART ANEW AMID HER FABLED SPLENDOURS. AND EVEN YET HIS MIGHTY FIGURE HAUNTS FAR LANDS IN LEGENDS THAT TELL WITH AWE HIS CHIVALRY AND VALOUR.

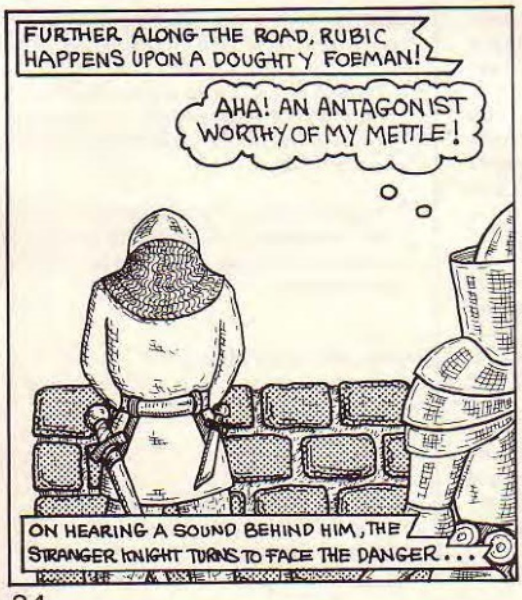
— THE CHRONICLES OF MOGGEDON —

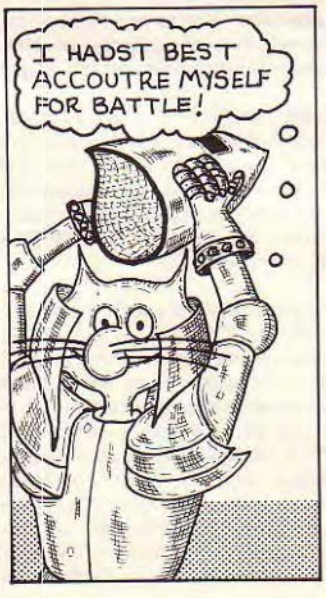


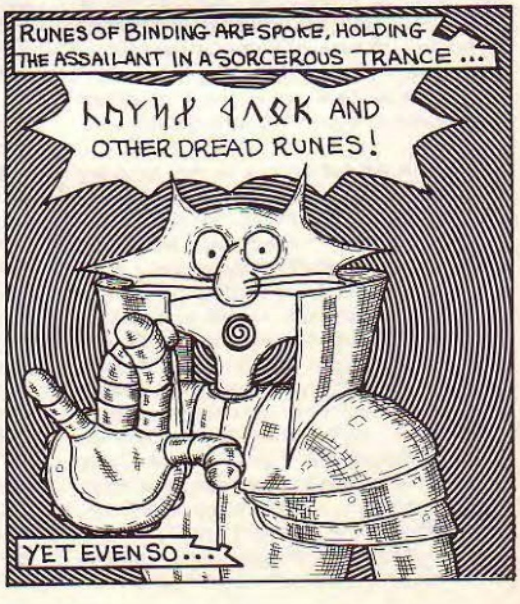







FURTHER ALONG THE ROAD, RUBIC HAPPENS UPON A DOUGHTY FOEMAN!
AHA! AN ANTAGONIST WORTHY OF MY METTLE!
ON HEARING A SOUND BEHIND HIM, THE STRANGER KNIGHT TURNS TO FACE THE DANGER...





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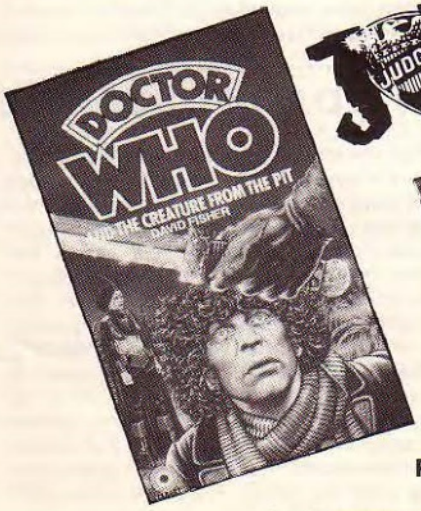

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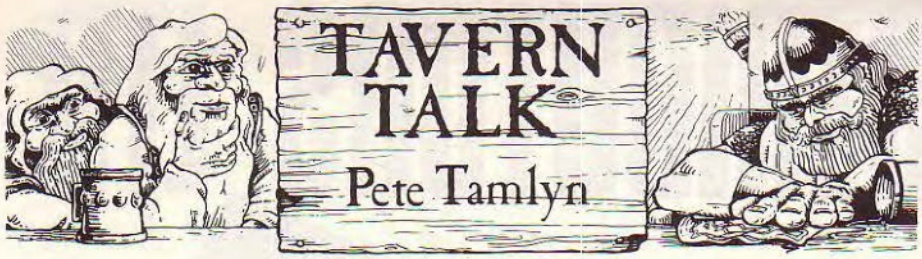


Hello again (he says, wondering how many times he'll be able to get away with that opening line), is anyone still reading? Yes, of course you are, you're all expecting me to come out with a whole load of spicy gossip about the goings on at GamesFair, aren't you? Well, sorry to disappoint you, but despite all of the sorcerous marvels that the Dark Masters at the Mill have at their disposal (Cockburn's Black Box of Word Processing and other such magical artifacts), it still takes somewhat over a month for this column to find its way from my pen to the printed page. Besides, stamps are expensive and Aylesbury to Cambridge is a long way for a small kobold like Godfrey to have to walk. Perhaps next issue, OK?

Meanwhile, back to the task in hand: exposing the scandalous goings on in the high society world of role-playing fandom. And who better to begin with than last year's Games Day Award winners, **Dragonlords**. Despite the recent abrupt departure of Marc 'venom' Gascoigne who, having more or less exhausted current possibilities, has boldly gone to insult where no man has been properly insulted before, Mike Lewis and Ian Marsh continue to go from strength to strength. Their most prestigious coup to date has involved a distribution arrangement with business megastars, Games Workshop. Mind you, this notable marriage very nearly ended up in the divorce courts before the happy couple had even exchanged rings, a satirical advert for 'Citabout Miniatures' being cited as the 'third party'. Happily everything now seems to be moonlight and roses once more. It's good stuff, moonlight, I wonder which of them will grow hairs on their palms first?

Not content with such magnificence, the DL team are considering turning their attentions to yet another major title, the European Postal Diplomacy 'Zine Poll. 'What is this?', I hear you ask, 'and does Terry Wogan compere the presentation ceremony?'. Well, not quite, though I'm sure that Richard Walkerdine would do an impression if people asked him nicely. Diplomacy, for those not in the know, is a popular and fairly simple boardgame. (And when I say 'simple' I mean that Tom Kirby claims to have played four games and to have won every time!) It is, however, admirably suited to play by post and large numbers of games fanzines feature it. If DL choose to run the game, thereby qualifying for the Poll, they will join a field of about 50 'zines and will be the first mainstream FRP 'zine to do so. 'Serious' boardgamers are doubtless already crossing themselves and shouting 'Irving' in horror at the prospect of 'fairy gamers' encroaching on their domain. I await developments with interest.

Incidently, competition time: can anyone tell me the correct meaning *and origin* of the term 'Irving'? A free, autographed photo of Godfrey to the first five correct entries that I manage to prevent him from eating.

Still on the subject of Diplomacy, a very important event took place alongside last year's National Diplomacy Tournament. This was the first ever British Mousie Mousie Championship. Proving considerably more taxing than the jumping frogs game used to keep the drunkards quiet the previous year, this prestigious event was finally won by Ms Lee Owers, thus far outshining her boyfriend, Jem Clarke, who only managed 3rd place in the Diplomacy. The reason that I impart this vital piece of information is so as to demonstrate the games-playing credentials of Lee who also happens to be the 'chairperson' of the Sol III, Star Trek fan convention to be held in Birmingham in May (see this issue's Forthcoming Events column on page 17 for details). So keen are the Convention organisers to attract gamers that they are setting a special room apart for SF boardgames and role-playing games. Anyone interested in branching out into the whacky world of SF fandom (well, Trekkies actually, but you've got to start somewhere) would be well advised to pay Sol III a visit.

Finally some more good news for people interested in SF fandom from Simon Billenness. 'Biggles', voted 'Upstart of the Year 1982' by postal gamers for his relentless drive towards hobby superstardom, has finally managed to track down some listings of SF fanzines similar to his own **20 Years On**. More details will doubtless be forthcoming in his next issue.

Pete Tamlyn

STAR EXPLORER

'Star Explorer - explore the Final Frontier' burbles the box lid. 'To boldly split infinitives... Beam me up, Scottie!', was my response both to this and the unsophisticated artwork. The contents of the box were no less uninspiring; a white hex grid of the 'universe' with tables and charts in black (when will designers learn that black print does NOT stand out on bright grass green?), a pad of logsheets (of which more anon), three dice (two useful d6's and a d10 that requires 20/20 vision and a microscope) and a rule book.

The aim is to explore the randomly distributed planets and the game can be played solo or with up to four explorers; player interaction is limited to the race to finish inside the initially determined time-limit with the greatest number of Victory Points. The solitaire game starts slowly but cracks along at a good pace once the player begins to encounter the hazards of space, pirates and, in particular, the natural environment and lifeforms of the planet visited.

Setting up your expedition is well explained and useful suggestions made for first time players. Each starship is fitted out, at the player's discretion and to a set limit, with the usual hardware of engines, teleports, shields, beams and missiles; to

AFTERMATH —

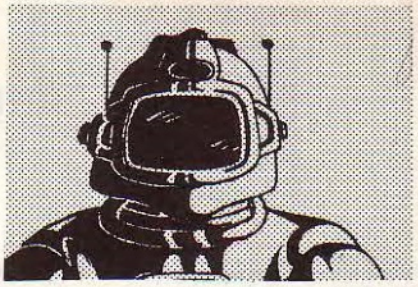
AFTERMATH is another role-playing game set in the future after the devastation of Nuclear War. The original setting for the game and its corresponding scenarios is Australia, but unless you have unlimited knowledge of the entire Australasian Continent, it is advised that you move the setting to a country where you have a good strong knowledge of its peculiarities in population and its political system and activities.

OPERATION MORPHEUS makes good, clear reading, even to those, like myself, who are uninitiated in the actual play of the game. Having now admitted that I have never played AFTERMATH (nor do I, at present, have a copy of the rule book(s))

WILDERNESS HEX

Hex sheets are commonly used in Adventure Games for the preparation of maps. In case you have not encountered them before, they are simply sheets of paper overprinted with a grid of hexagons. This grid is useful when drawing a map, in delineating different terrain types and, perhaps most importantly, for regulating movement. Games Workshop's **WILDERNESS HEX SHEETS** are an A4 pad of 50 such sheets with 6mm hexes. They are well produced and, given the proven usefulness of these aids, they should be helpful to any referee. My only reservation is with the price. They are about 30%

GAME REVIEWS



which are added fuel points and armour points for maximum damage, the former being used up in movement and survival and the latter when fired on by enemy ships. The player then chooses his crew teams for both space travel and exploration. These include Navigation and Damage Control and also Geologists, Fuel Engineers, Animal Physiologists, Botanists, those skilled in contacting other sentient life-forms as well as the Medical and Military specialists.

Die-cut cardboard counters are supplied for each team and the artwork here is better, but it is a pity that the counters are just too large to fit comfortably onto the logsheet squares. Another omission is the lack of provision for noting ship damage on the sheets and this is a nuisance.

The starships progress at pre-selected speeds, paid for in advance with fuel points, hex by hex, and for each hex 1d6 is thrown. On a 6 an incident has occurred which may be anything from asteroids or radiation to pirates, traders or even a crisis at homebase which affects all players until resolved by one of them. This phase can be a little tedious but it does inject some variety especially as hazards, such as asteroids, stay in place and so may affect other players. Combat, when it occurs, is very time consuming and usually counter productive but this is probably intentional in a game which has a stated aim of exploration rather than 'klingon-zapping'. The second phase is planetary exploration and the natural environment of each is determined by dice throw when the first ship arrives. This may range from swamp through to volcanoes or hard radiation.

Each planet has three encounters or disasters to be overcome and victory points can be won (or lost) using a well thought out system of scores and dice throws. Careful selection of teams for each encounter balanced against the possible loss or incapacitation of valuable crew is vital at this stage but all the time the player is working against the system and not against other players. Of course with more than one player a certain degree of strategy is needed to ensure maximum points where possible, but the game slows down considerably and with four players we found that we required about 15 minutes per round. With no player interaction this meant a wait of over 10 minutes between turns.

To conclude, this is an interesting game with some good ideas, but the components and rules show a lack of playtesting and the artwork leaves much to be desired. The game is better for solitaire play than for a group but the main criticism is that it is grossly overpriced. It is not, in my opinion, a recommended buy.

J. C. Conner

STAR EXPLORER, a boxed game with hex grid, charts, rulebook and dice, is manufactured in the USA by Fantasy Games Unlimited. It is distributed in this country by Games of Liverpool, 89 Victoria Street, Liverpool L1 6DG. Price £9.95.

OPERATION MORPHEUS

I cannot give this scenario, or the game, the full playability review that (by my reading and understanding of this scenario) it deserves. However, as an experienced role-player of many years (why, whenever I write that do I feel very old?) I would be positive that, as long as the game system itself stands up to the test, OPERATION MORPHEUS would be a very interesting, playable, and exciting adventure to play and also importantly, to referee.

For this scenario to work well, the AFTERMATH rules need to have an easy, or relatively easy, combat system, with varied, but controlled weapon availability and usage. This is because of the melee(s) that take place, which need to be dealt with swiftly, yet realistically, allowing the game to flow at a generous pace, as the reading of OPERATION MORPHEUS seems to imply should take place.

Wherever necessary, Phil McGregor has been thoughtful to provide fully descriptive artwork and room designs, making the refereeing an easier and less brain-boggling task. There is still a minor amount of work to be done before the scenario can be started, but this is general to all RPG's and therefore expected by all except the inexperienced or newcomer to the referee scene.

This scenario seems to have been well researched and designed more for the pleasure of the adventurers (ie players) than for the egotistic boosting of the author, as often seems the case with many other RPG scenarios.

If you have the rules to AFTERMATH, and you enjoy the game, I suggest that you take yourself off to your nearest stockist, and invest in OPERATION MORPHEUS, you, or your players, won't regret it. (Well maybe the dead ones will - a little!!!)

Chris Baylis

OPERATION MORPHEUS, an AFTERMATH scenario, is manufactured in the USA by Fantasy Games Unlimited, and is distributed in the UK by Games of Liverpool. Price £ 4.95

SHEETS ..... DUNGEON MAPPING SHEETS

dearer than similar sheets available 'loose' (i.e. not in pads). The only substantial difference is the superior packaging of the Games Workshop product. It may therefore be wise to shop around before settling for the WILDERNESS HEX SHEETS.

DUNGEON MAPPING SHEETS are Games Workshop's mate to the Wilderness Sheets. In this case the overprinted grid is of 2.5mm squares. These are intended for larger scale representations than the hex sheets (plans rather than maps) and are likely to be used mainly for dungeons, castles or villages. Until now most people will have used graph paper for these tasks.

The DUNGEON MAPPING SHEETS offer 'compatibility with' Games Workshop's 'DUNGEON FLOOR PLANS' (although this compatibility is not enlarged upon). They also have a half millimetre gap between the squares which enables users to show walls at a realistic scale width, without encroaching into the squares proper. On the negative side, they are more than twice the price of graph paper.

Both items are well designed for the purposes for which they are intended. However, alternatives are available at less cost. The price difference must be mainly attributable to the fancy packaging: a point worth remembering before parting with your hard earned cash.

Doug Cowie

WILDERNESS HEX SHEETS and DUNGEON MAPPING SHEETS are available in pads of 50 from Games Workshop, 27/29 Sunbeam Rd, LONDON NW10 6JP. Price is £1.99 per pad.

GAMES REVIEWS

THE MORROW PROJECT

In 1962, Bruce Edward Morrow gathered together some top industrialists to form the Council of Tomorrow. Realising that Nuclear War was imminent, they decided that humankind would need their combined knowledge to re-establish a viable community in the devastated aftermath. They hit upon a scheme to secrete equipment, weapons, rations and 'stored' knowledge (cassettes etc) in underground vaults known as 'Bolt Holes' along with 'cryogenically' frozen personnel teams. To help each team with its mission, MORROW personnel would, from time to time, open the Bolt Holes and refurbish the equipment, updating the weapons and taped knowledge.

The teams were told that they would be awoken by a protective computer about four years after the conclusion of war, when it was safe to explore outside.

My first impressions of the MORROW PROJECT made me want to begin a game immediately. The idea seemed new and exciting, and the system looked advanced, well thought out and imaginative.

Character construction looks a little complicated, but it seems to give a much more detailed and realistic idea of a playable person, and it is therefore worth spending time building up background.

COMBAT TABLES

The numerous tables for Combat give realism, but add up to an enormous amount of playing time as they are checked, indexed, cross referenced, rolled against, checked again, rolled against again, cross-indexed, and then argued over by the PD (Project Director or Referee) and his players. Although realistic, they are extremely awkward and difficult to use.

There is an NPC 'Fast Kill' table, but using it for NPCs and the full system for Player Characters makes a mockery of Combat, and using it for both PCs and NPCs kills characters quicker than even a computer could manufacture them.

If you are a 'weapons freak' this game will put you in your element; a third of the rule book is devoted to weapons and armoury. However, after deciding which weapon you are using, its various, numerous statistics, the number of shots available to be fired and the number actually fired, etc. etc... you throw your 'to hit' on the same table as if you had used a Smith & Wesson hand gun. All the information turns out to be just that... information!

The hand-to-hand combat rules are not explained fully, dealing only with various kicks, punches and bites; not mentioning grappling, which in a game of this type should come up quite regularly.

This is not an RPG that can be played satisfactorily in an evening, needing almost unlimited preparation by the PD (who must have a substantial knowledge of modern weapons). Nor is it a game that one can envisage being played on a wide scale with figures and other 'visual' aids, this being a major part of gaming for many players and manufacturers.

NEW MODULES

In addition to these rules, there are currently two scenarios available. The first of these, **LIBERATION AT RIVERTON** is designed to introduce the new player to the MORROW PROJECT.

Having awoken the characters from a cryogenic sleep, the computer reminds them of their mission, leaving them to familiarise themselves with their equipment and surroundings. The team now sets out on its 'do or die' mission, to free the population of Riverton (about 23 people) from the 'all-powerful' Imps (military police).

There is not an abundance of information concerning this scenario; that which is available to the players is given to them in an unconvincing way. There is a farmhouse which the PD *must* place directly in the team's path (whichever way they opt to go) in which live a family who have most of the needed information. This is, however, one of the few real chances for the players to role-play, and is vital to the success of their mission.

PROJECT DAMOCLES, the second scenario, is designed more for the thinking player than the 'shoot first, ask questions afterwards' type who would have been better suited in RIVERTON. The capture of DAMOCLES is almost possible without a gun being fired; the equipment, both in choice and amounts, must be used with tremendous thought and restraint.

DAMOCLES is an all-powerful computer which can either be the destruction or, if captured, the saviour of the whole project. The PD will have his work cut out taking the part of DAMOCLES. This is because DAMOCLES can actually *think*, and therefore should answer all the team's questions in a reasonably full way, if asked the right questions. He must play himself as an unbiased referee, and at the same time play DAMOCLES very much against the team.

If the players know much about the construction (and therefore the control) of major computers, the PD must also be careful not to give too much information away. If this is so, he will have to concede too many points thereby making the completion of their mission more possible. With this in mind, the PD should, before attempting to play this module, read up quite a lot about 'what makes a computer *tick*' so that he is at least on a par with his players; or allow only players with a little knowledge of computers into his game.

The scenario is very well designed, but tends to get bogged down in the middle. An experienced PD will have the forethought to include minor (yet not fatal) diversions to keep the players' minds occupied during these passing phases.

The team must be allowed all the help possible if they are to survive, let alone succeed, and this is only going to happen if the PD has really done his homework throughout the module. Although he should allow them to 'get on with it in their own way', the PD could give the teams' memories a slight jog in the right direction, reminding them on occasion of what they are carrying, where they are in respect to where they are heading.

REVELATION OF THE '80s

As with the rule book and RIVERTON, DAMOCLES contains a mass of technical data, much of which will not be known by the average player. It is up to the PD to ensure that the players realise that their characters **do** know most of these details, and to aid them if they are having difficulty with something that they should (character-wise) be able to do at once.

This is initially a very confusing game to play, yet with a lot of time and effort by the selected PD, this could be the revelation role-playing game of the '80s, becoming expandable and popular enough to rival any of the other major role-playing games available at the present time.

Chris Baylis

The Morrow Project (published in the USA by TIMELINE LTD.) can be obtained from Flying Buffalo, PO Box 100, Bath Street, Walsall, W. Midlands and costs £6.95. Liberation at Riverton is £4.95, the PD Shield is £3.50. The price of Damocles was unavailable at press time.

ILLUSIONARY SCRIPT

Adventures may be scarce in the city of T'mill, but when one does turn up the inhabitants will be ready: **Gordius** has been collecting and devising brain teasers to enable us all to build up experience points.... one at a time. Here is a selection of the puzzles so you, too, can test your adventuring wits.

Before you start on any adventure, you need to decide what equipment you are going to take. With these instructions we have little choice:

You know you need at least one scroll case (5gp), one flask of oil (1gp) and one candle (1sp), and you've been told you MUST spend 100gp getting supplies of these three items. So how many of each will you take?

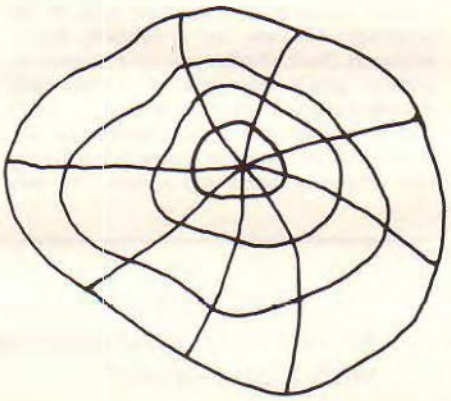
Once you are correctly equipped, you can set off for your destination without further ado. It helps if you know something about orienteering: see what you make of this one:

The group playing your **Trivia**® *science-fiction adventure game has just landed at the South Pole on a new planet. They go North one mile, east three miles and south one mile: how far are they from where they landed?*

Experienced mappers would have no trouble with that one. However it's not just a matter of common sense: faced with a hairy situation, a little magic can come in handy! Boris the Bard obviously helped to write our Magic-user's spell book, because some of the ingredients are listed in rhyming riddle form. This one shouldn't cause you too much trouble:

Two personal pronouns if you take
And join them in due order,
A Herb you'll name, without mistake,
That scents the garden border.

In some situations, mental dexterity saves time that might be wasted trying to solve a problem by trial and error:



A party of eight adventurers enters a room with a weird pattern on the floor.

They soon discover that they must stand so that two of them are on the 'straight' lines and two on each of the concentric ones. How do they do it?

Even more important than manual dexterity is logic. If you had managed to obtain the following clues, would you be able to draw the only obvious conclusion?

Clue A) Monsters that do not live on people are dull in appearance.
Clue B) All Trolls appear colourful.
Clue C) No nice monsters live on people.

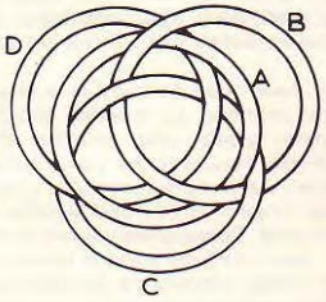
Of course it always helps if you know how much time you have to play with. Test your intelligence with this description of a Dungeon trap:

The adventurers are in a room with no spells left. The Ogre that locked them in has told them that the pipe on the left would fill the room in 10 minutes, the one on the right in 15 minutes, and that the grate in the floor will empty the room in 7.5 minutes. Leaving, he opens both pipes and the grate. Will the adventurers drown, and if so, how long have they got to get out?

As a hint, let me tell you that the answer is *not* that if you spend time working it out you drown automatically.

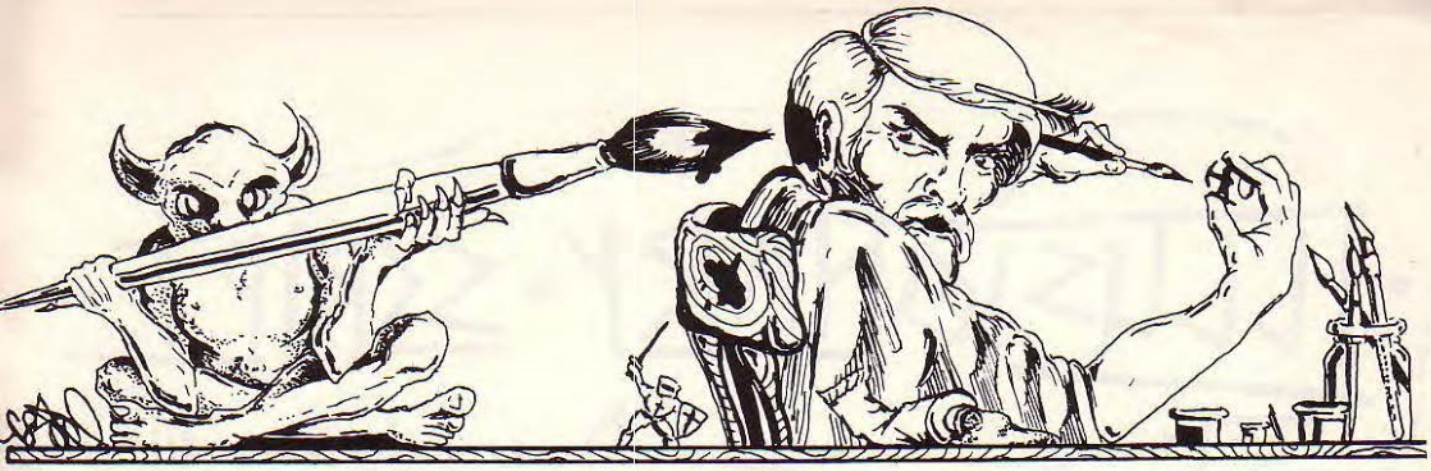
And then, at last, there's the treasure! In this puzzle you have been set the task of removing one of four rings from a pile.

Which ring should be removed, by cutting it if necessary, to leave the others inter-linked?



Puzzles devised by Gordius.

Answers on page 44. If you have a puzzle that might amuse the people of T'Mill, send it to IMAGINE™ magazine (Illusionary Script), TSR Hobbies Ltd., The Mill, Rathmore Road, CAMBRIDGE CB1 4AD.



PAINTING THE REST OF THE FIGURE

Having completed the flesh areas on the figure, you can now carry on with the rest of it.

It is best to block in the lighter areas of colour first; all the whites, buffs and pale colours. Work on the darker tones after you have finished with the light ones entirely. Try to apply the colours in continuous smooth strokes. Painting small patches of colour, or working with too small a brush, only roughens the surface and prevents a smooth finished product.

When you have blocked in a major area, it is time to bring the figure to life by shading. Emphasising the shadows and highlights prevents the figure looking flat. Look at the area you have painted and see where the shadows naturally fall when the light source is above the figure. These are where the painted shadows are going to occur. Mix a darker shade with some of the base colour and apply it to the depressions in each crease, blending it in with an almost dry brush of the same colour. Now make up a lighter mix with some of the base shade and apply that to the upper side of the crest of each crease, again blending this into the base colour with an almost dry brush. If your first results dishearten you, remember that with more practice you will get better.

Whites have to be handled in a slightly different manner, by treating them as very pale 'greys' and painting them accordingly. However, by using colours other than black to produce these shades, a whole range of 'greys' and 'whites' can be produced. Ochre gives a linen or wool effect, depending on what is introduced with it; umber produces a dull dusty look of its own, and with a touch of ultramarine gives a range of very interesting tones. Using reds and greens produces a pure fantasy effect which can be very effective if not overdone. All of these off-whites can be highlighted with pure white, but for the very highest of highlights, add a touch of blue. It isn't only washing powders that can seem whiter with a blue-white!

Throughout each of these articles, I have talked about 'lighter' and 'darker' shades of a base colour — but how are these arrived at? In most cases the answer is very simple: 'lighter' means adding white and 'darker' means adding some complementary colour (*not* black, which just makes colours look murkier, and is too emphatic for use on a fantasy figure anyway). Dark shades can be achieved by adding small amounts of umber and ultramarine to any particular colour, or by adding a touch of a contrasting colour, some blue into reds or a small amount of red, umber or sepia into a blue. The only range of tones where the general rule about lighter shades breaks down are the reds. Add white to any red and a cold pink will be the result. Yellows and oranges (including yellow ochre) have to be used in this particular case.

When you wish to use metallics they should be left until last. Rather than painting a metallic straight from the tin and then varnishing, it is far better to shade them. Metallics shade by adding non-metallic colours to them. Browns shade gold, and blacks and blues shade silver, converting it into steel. Of course, with fantasy figures there is no reason why reds, greens, purples or any other colour should not be used.

Many of the best effects with metallics can be obtained by dry brushing. Burnt umber paint should be applied to all those areas destined to be gold on the finished product, and then the gold paint dry-brushed on. By doing the same thing with a red/orange/brown mixture with a finishing brush of a steel colour, rusty armour can be created.

FINISHING

Once you have finished painting, put the figure to one side and leave it to dry **completely**. If you have finished the painting session, go and wash your brushes now, before you forget. **Do not** try to force-dry the figure in any way, either actively, with something like a hair-drier, or passively by leaving it over a radiator, as this will cause the paint to crack.

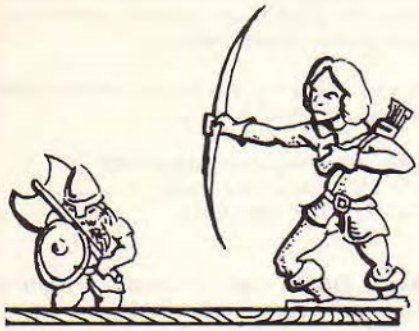
...For the highest of highlights, add a touch of blue. It isn't only washing powders that can seem whiter with a blue-white!

But before you tell yourself that the figure is finished, look at it very carefully. The chances are that you have missed something, some little spot that you didn't quite reach. When you do find something you have missed, touch it in with the relevant colour. There is always the brute force approach of giving the figure a wash, a very thin wash, of dark grey or burnt umber to cover any little patches of undercoating that are showing.

When the figure is dry, varnish it. This will give the paint surface a much longer life, although eventually, if you handle it a lot, it will show the ravages of time. Always use a matt varnish, and let it dry completely. If you don't let it dry, your figure will be permanently identifiable as yours because of finger and thumb prints.

At this stage the figure is just about ready for use. You should now paint the cast

Figure Painting



by Mike Brunton

Mike Brunton is arguably Britain's leading painter of 25mm fantasy figures. His figures came 1st and 2nd in the Gamesday '82 painting competition. This article concludes his two part series giving hints and tips on all aspects of fantasy figure painting.

base a neutral colour and varnish it and then, having removed the figure from its painting handle, either use it as it is or mount it on an extra base. If you choose the second course (which is neater and gives the figure a means of protection by providing it with a handle), then you should glue the figure to a piece of rigid material which is large enough to provide a stable stand, but not too large. I have found that a square of thin balsa wood, plastic card, or thin plywood of about 2cm x 2cm is just about ideal for most figures. Glue the figure firmly down.

The creation of the groundwork is the next stage. Almost any good quality filler will do the job. Lay the particular material you are using onto the base around and over the casting to the edge of any shoes, cloaks etc. Basically there are two finishes which can be produced: a roughcast finish, which involves generally pricking and prodding the surface into shape; or a dungeon floor finish which involves scribing a flagstone pattern into the filler with the tip of a craft knife. You can also add bits and pieces to the groundwork at this stage — broken swords, skulls, axes etc., which can be obtained from many manufacturers. When the filler is dry, paint it with whatever colours you want to use. There is no real need to varnish, as the paint will soak into the filler.

MONSTERS

Painting monsters (the inhuman types with more legs and heads than standard) is basically the same as painting any other type of figure. More care and attention is needed when one is painting monsters than for human/humanoid figures because not all manufacturers spend a great deal of time and effort on the bad guys. The basic techniques for painting figures remain the same. Drybrushing colours and thin washes are used a good deal more to obtain the effect of hair, fur, scales or slimy skin. As far as colours are concerned, the AD&D™ Monster Manual is quite useful for reference purposes, as is the artwork of Frank Frazetta, Chris Achilleos and others.

When painting monsters remember that most of them live in rather poor conditions, so before rushing off and painting everything in 'Glorious Technicolour', think for a moment. Most monsters will be in less than pristine condition and probably will be rather tatty (dungeons are far from hygienic). Those that dress at all will more than likely be dressed in hand-me-downs and old furs, mouldering leather accoutrements, rusty armour and damaged equipment. The more powerful monsters will have generally better gear, but almost none of it will be new. Gold, silver and other precious metals, and jewelry, will remain in good condition. All this means that in most cases bright colours will be inappropriate. There will be exceptions. Dragons, for example, will be bright and highly attractive as far as colour schemes go.

> Monsters that dress at all will more than likely be dressed in hand-me-downs and old furs...

Start with the most deeply recessed areas and work outwards. As with humans, the eyes make or break the figure. Eyes in most monsters will be larger and consequently easier to paint. Remember that many monsters have slitted pupils, which are often very prominent. Adding a pinpoint of white to the pupil makes the eyes a good deal more lively.

There are two very simple painting practices which apply to monsters. The first of these is a method of producing a realistic treatment for lizard scales. By adding a small amount of metallic paint to a dark basic shade, painting this mix onto the figure and then lightly drybrushing with a paler, slightly metallic shade, a decent looking lizard can be produced. Don't overdo the metallic paint, it wants to be no more than a taint in the mixture.

The second practice concerns slime, say on a Purple Worm. Once you have rendered the worm to the desired degree of purple-ness, let it dry and then apply several thin washes of various green tones. Let this dry and give the figure a coat of matt varnish. Now mix some yellow/green tone into some gloss or semi-gloss varnish and apply this as a *patchy* wash. Result — slime-coated horror.

ANIMATION & CONVERSION

Of all modelling techniques that exist in the field of military miniatures (the closest related area to fantasy figures) the two most likely to be used by anyone producing the kinds of figures we have been looking at are animation and conversion. What follows is not meant to be definitive as far as these techniques are concerned, but only an overview.If you want to get involved in really major work in this area then I urge you to get hold of some good basic handbooks on military modelling.

Animation is the modelling process of changing the pose of a figure, by surgically chopping and changing the position of limbs and/or heads. Conversion, on the other hand, is the changing of the type of figure (with or without altering the pose), say from a fighter to a cleric, by substituting a mace for a sword and adding various holy symbols.

continued on page 43

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continued from page 41

Apart from just cleaning up a casting before painting, by removing all moulding dimples, lines and flash, there are other simple things which can be tried to improve a figure. Sometimes swords on castings resemble sections of telegraph poles with handles; these can be *gently* thinned down by scraping with a craft knife and 'wet and dry' paper to give a more swordlike appearance. Likewise spears, which often look like whole telegraph poles, can be replaced by wire counterparts, if the spears are separately cast.

An experienced modeller might attempt even more fiddly work by adding a bowstring to an archer figure. I have found that the best material for this is stretched plastic sprue from any old kit which one can find. Sprue (the moulding runner) can be stretched by heating it over a candle until it begins to bend. Remove it from the heat and pull the ends apart, extruding the middle section into a long, thin filament. This plastic hair can now be used to make a bowstring. Measure roughly the length required to span the bow, and cut a length to fit. Then, using as little glue as possible on the end of a pin, place a drop on each end of the bow. Carefully position your length of stretched sprue, and there you have a bowstring. If the figure has an arrow already in position, then two lengths of plastic are required, each a mirror of the other.

Crossbows can be treated in a similar manner. This technique can even be used (by the truly masochistic) to add strings to Bard's harps, lutes, etc. when these are not cast, or even to replace them when they are.

If you want to add variety and originality to the pose of stock castings, then certain alterations are possible. If you wish to try animation, start simple, and work your way up to more complete changes.

The simplest change of all is bending a limb. Do not just bend the limb to the desired angle, because in most cases this will just result in a smooth curve between, say, shoulder and hand. Most creatures have a rigid skeletal structure with quite definite joints. The best way to alter the position of the limb when bending is to make a V-shaped cut in the crook of the joint and then bend it, resulting in a straight limb with a bend rather than a curved limb.

Straightening a limb is less satisfactory. Again a cut must be made in the crook of the limb, but it must be a single straight incision. The limb is then bent straight and the gap in the joint is filled with some sort of modelling putty.

More drastic surgery is required to alter the position of a limb from its joint with the body, or to alter the position of the head. The limb or head has to be separated completely from the body and then reattached at the new angle. Be careful if you go in for this and make sure that limbs end at the same length as they started.

Conversion is the alteration of a type of figure into a completely different form. It may involve the marriage of two figures to produce one brand new, highly individualised model. For example, the top half of a fighter and the body of a giant scorpion can be used to create the Man Scorpion that appeared some while back in the Fiend Factory section of *White Dwarf* magazine.

The possibilities in this field are literally endless. If you do intend to give any serious effort to this type of modelling, it is worth remembering that many modelling companies now produce separate weapons and other bits and pieces. Asgard Miniatures produce skulls in 25mm scale, as well as weapons. Lamming Miniatures produce a truly enormous range of weapons, helmets and shields. Dixon Miniatures have a small but interesting selection of Japanese style weaponry.

Conversion is a highly individual activity. There are no hard and fast rules as far as it is concerned, except that care is always needed to maintain anatomical 'reasonable-ness'. Furthermore, remember that a modest paint job on a standard casting will always look better than a brilliantly inspired creation of paint on a poor piece of model work.

If you want to add variety and originality to the pose of stock castings then start simple and work your way up to more complete changes.

Mike Brunton

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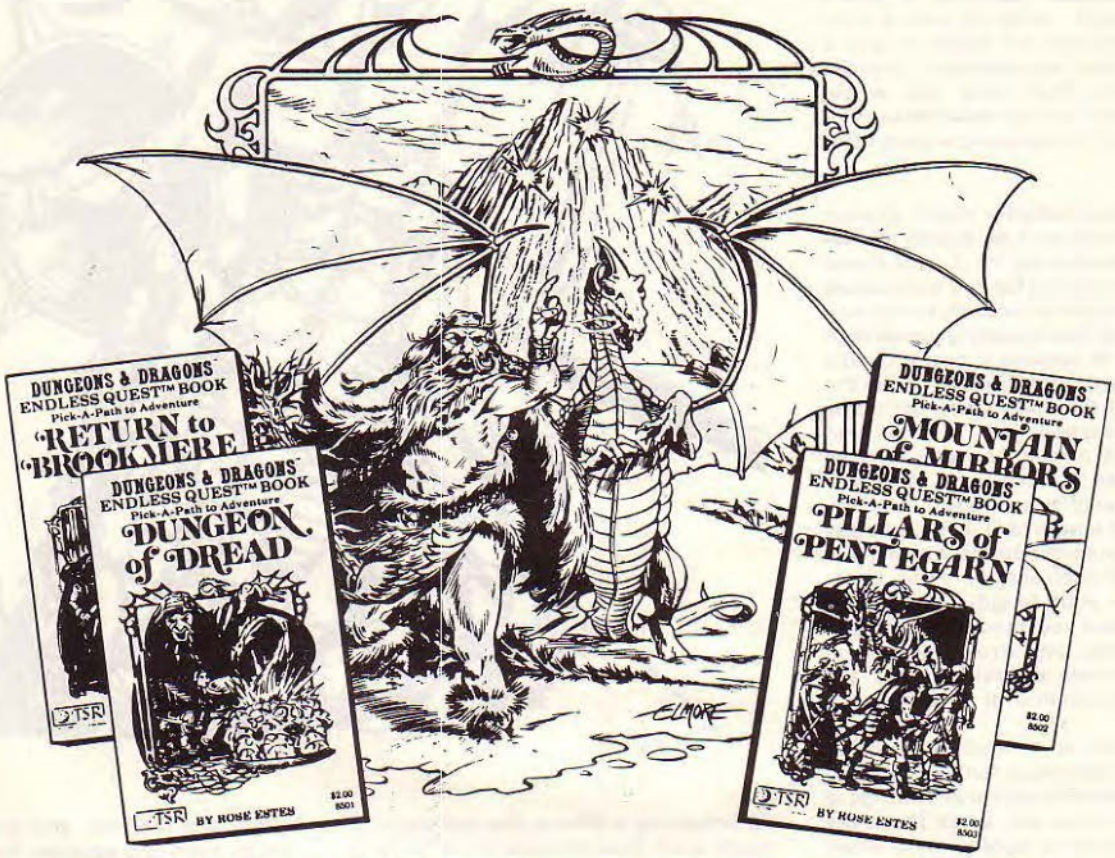

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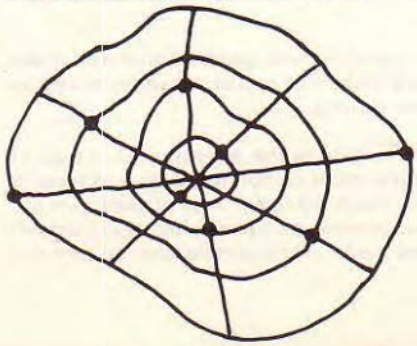
Illusionary Script
Answers

The required equipment for the adventure is 1 flask of oil, 19 scroll cases and 80 candles. So, now you know the answer, what are you going to do with it all?

The little mapping question requires the answer: the same place.

Thyme (THY-ME) is the mysterious ingredient in the Magic-User's spell book.

The eight adventurers will progress past the floor pattern if they stand like this:



You can tell from the clues that no trolls are nice. Hardly earth-shattering news....

The trapped adventurers in the next puzzle will drown in 30 minutes unless they can get out.

Lastly, Ring D can be extracted from the pile, to leave the others interlinked.

Film Review

In the absence of Colin Greenland, **Nick Pratt** takes a look at **The Island at the Top of the World**, a Walt Disney film starring Donald Sinden.

Made way back in 1973, **The Island at the Top of the World** is a misguided re-release, one of those infuriating films which never quite lives up to its apparent potential. By ignoring its own most interesting implications it clearly labels itself as a straightforward adventure tale, but as such its perfunctory plotting and generally low-budget atmosphere are likely to leave you screaming 'Why can't these things be done better?'

In 1908 a wealthy English gentleman hears that his son has disappeared in the Arctic whilst searching for a legendary island 'where the whales go to die'. Sir Anthony must have spent his youth reading all those lost world stories popular in Victorian times, because he refuses to give up hope and resolves to find the missing Donald himself.

To do this he buys control of a huge airship and flies off to the rescue, accompanied by Professor Ivarsson, an expert on the Arctic. After various mid-air exploits in the previously untested *Hyperion*, they locate Donald's eskimo guide and, despite his garbled warnings about 'demons', follow his reluctant directions into the uncharted north.

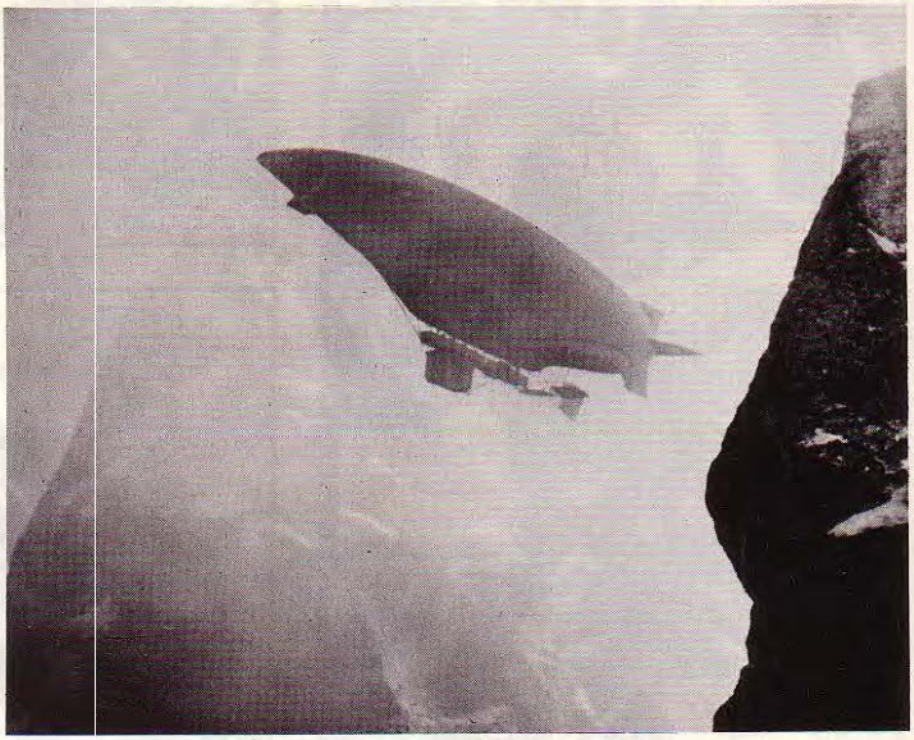
Sure enough, they eventually reach a hidden island, where a sudden storm forces them to crash land. Here they discover a volcanically heated valley, inhabited by the still-primitive descendants of Vikings who were cast away over 1000 years ago. Although Donald had been living peacefully among these people, the arrival of the newcomers in their strange craft stirs up fears of invasion, so that the Godi, or high priest, condemns all the outsiders to death.

The prisoners escape and flee towards the sanctuary of the Bay of Whales, dodging through boiling lava flows, surviving underground flash floods and fighting off the guardians of the Bay itself, only to be recaptured after all. Luckily for them the Godi has died during the chase and without his malign influence the Viking council is prepared to be lenient. The visitors are allowed to leave in exchange for vows of secrecy and a single hostage. As Ivarsson is delighted to stay behind and study this isolated culture, everyone presumably lives happily ever after.

The first problem with all of this is weak characterisation: from *Hyperion*'s Captain Brieux, an absurd cartoon Frenchman, to the supposedly evil but essentially motiveless Godi, we are expected to take an interest in a succession of drab, overfamiliar stereotypes. Donald Sinden manages to inject some relish into his portrayal of the blustering Sir Anthony, but the rest of the cast play their parts with a kind of stunned resignation, as if painfully aware how little scope stereotyped roles leave for individual acting talent.

Admittedly adventure movies are rarely noted for their intricate studies of human personality. Instead their dramatic incidents must be gripping enough to seize our full attention and drag us along enthralled. And dramatic tension is the second great problem with this film. Its introduction is ponderously slow and its climax is an unsatisfactory clutter of mini-crises. Even worse, many of its most sensational scenes are totally unconvincing, largely because the technology of special effects has grown rapidly since 1973 and in that respect, at least, so have our expectations. These days a few flying sparks superimposed over scrambling human figures hardly constitute a terrifying volcanic eruption, whilst to post-*Jaws* eyes the rigid plastic 'killer whales' lobbed at the explorers look distinctly laughable (especially when compared with genuine wildlife shots from the Disney archives which pad out the earlier stages of the journey).

What remains? The Vikings offer a certain fascination, with their barbaric costumes, impressive council hall full of glowering, torch-lit statues, and their understandable belief that they have been chosen to inhabit the only tiny paradise in an otherwise icy and desolate world. However, their community can hardly receive the attention it deserves when our protagonists spend most of their time running away. Apart from that, any enterprising Dungeon Masters might appreciate such touches as a mysteriously carved bone which proves to be a detailed map, but overall there is little to recommend a film which alternates uneasily between the dully predictable and the unintentionally comic.



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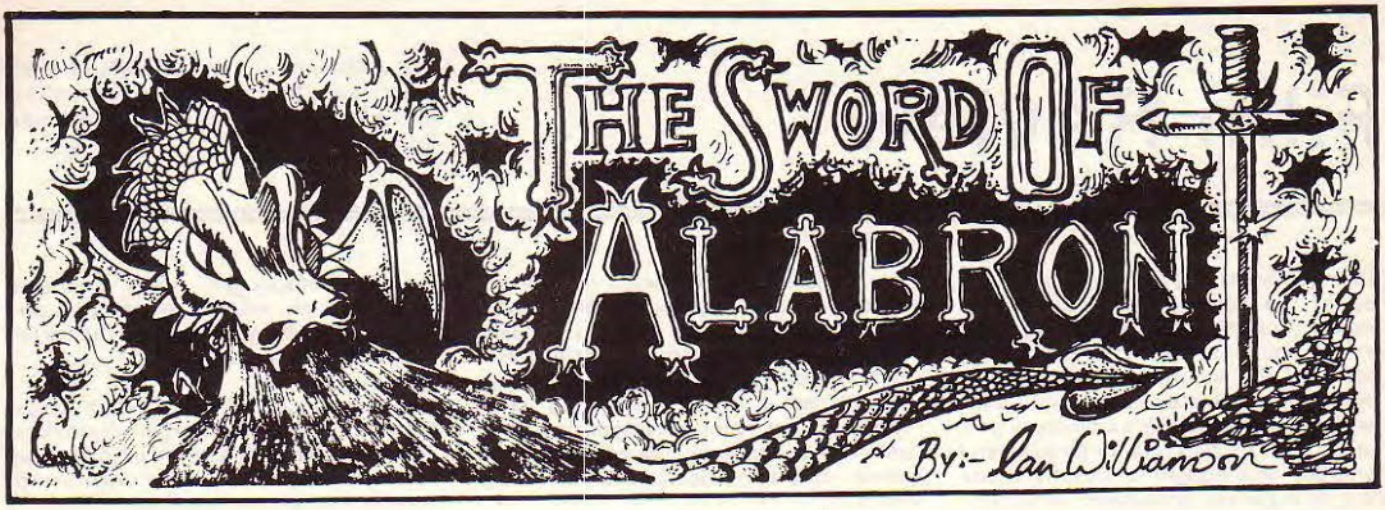
Nick Pratt

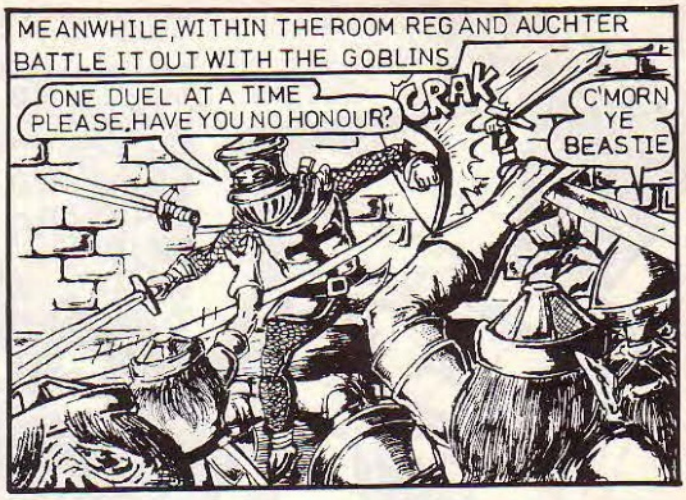
Our thanks to Nick for standing in at short notice when Colin became hospitalised; Colin will be back in time for his column in issue 4. Next month Dave Pringle will be reviewing the latest book releases.

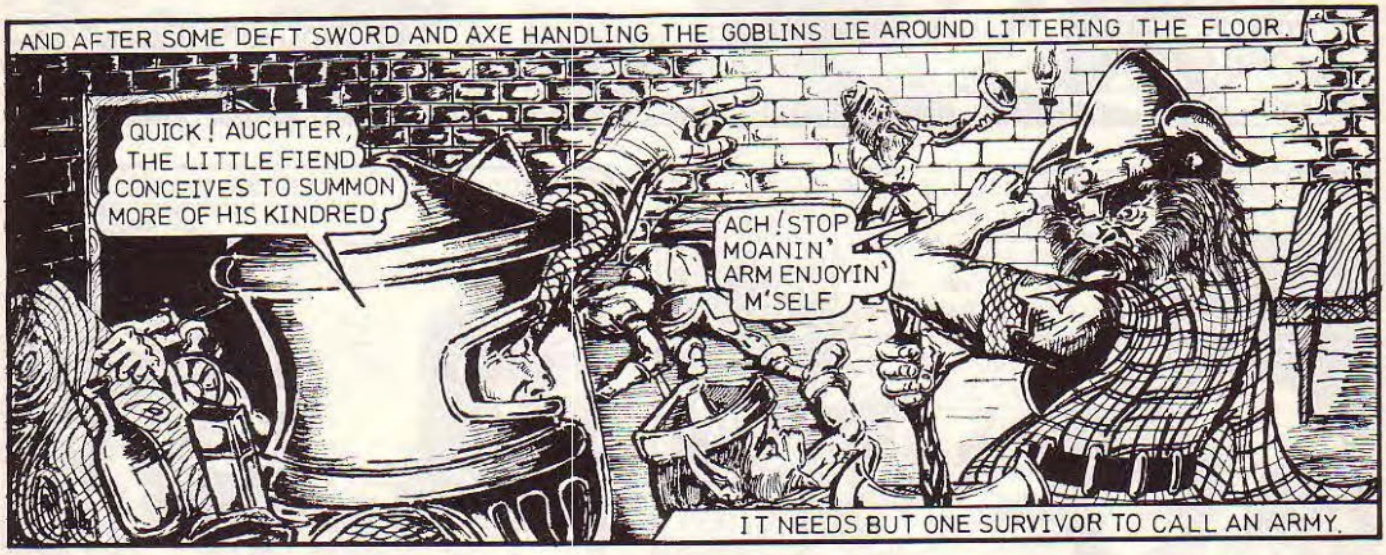

THE SWORD OF ALABRON
By:- Ian Williamson

WHEN THE ONLY EXIT FROM A BAD SITUATION IS THE DOOR..
..THAT'S OCCUPIED BY A HUNGRY OGRE
AND YOU'VE ONLY GOT 5 HIT POINTS ANYHOW. THEN WHAT DO YOU DO?

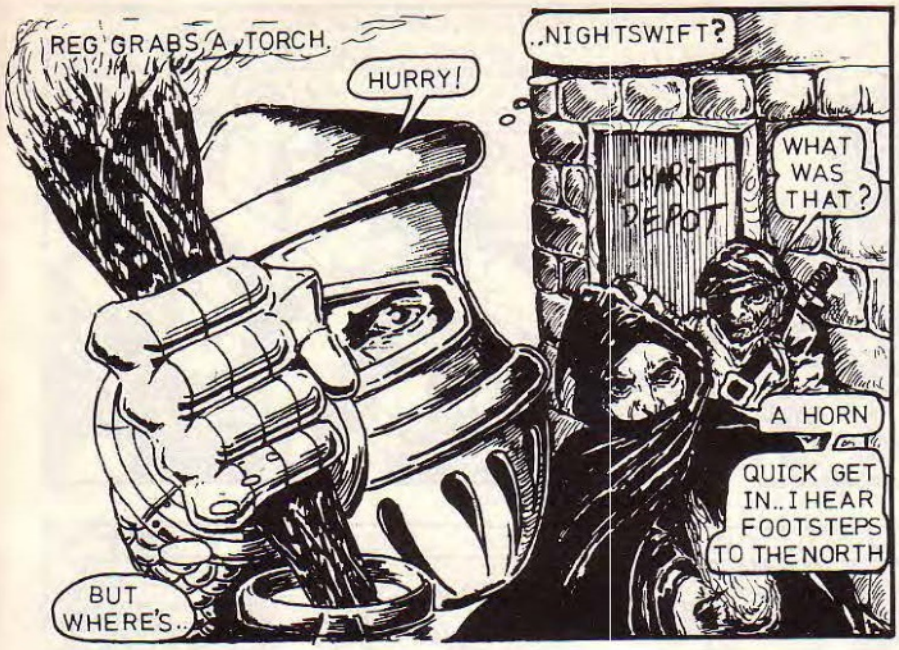
ANSWER :- YOU CONSULT YOUR LOCAL MAGIC-USER
NIGHTSWIFT, THERES AN OGRE AT THE DOOR BY KRELL!
JUST RELAX!
LET HIM COME IN
.. AND REST AWHILE!
NIGHTSWIFT THROWS A "SLEEP" SPELL.
AND LUCKILY IT WORKS.

HO HUM! NEVER WASTE A JOURNEY... WHAT'S HE GOT?
NOT NOW!
ZZZZZZ
LET'S GO.
ZZ


MEANWHILE, WITHIN THE ROOM REG AND AUCHTER BATTLE IT OUT WITH THE GOBLINS
ONE DUEL AT A TIME PLEASE. HAVE YOU NO HONOUR?
CRAK
C'MORN YE BEASTIE


AND AFTER SOME DEFT SWORD AND AXE HANDLING THE GOBLINS LIE AROUND LITTERING THE FLOOR.
QUICK! AUCHTER, THE LITTLE FIEND CONCEIVES TO SUMMON MORE OF HIS KINDRED
ACH! STOP MOANIN' ARM ENJOYIN' M'SELF
IT NEEDS BUT ONE SURVIVOR TO CALL AN ARMY.

BAAHAHAAA

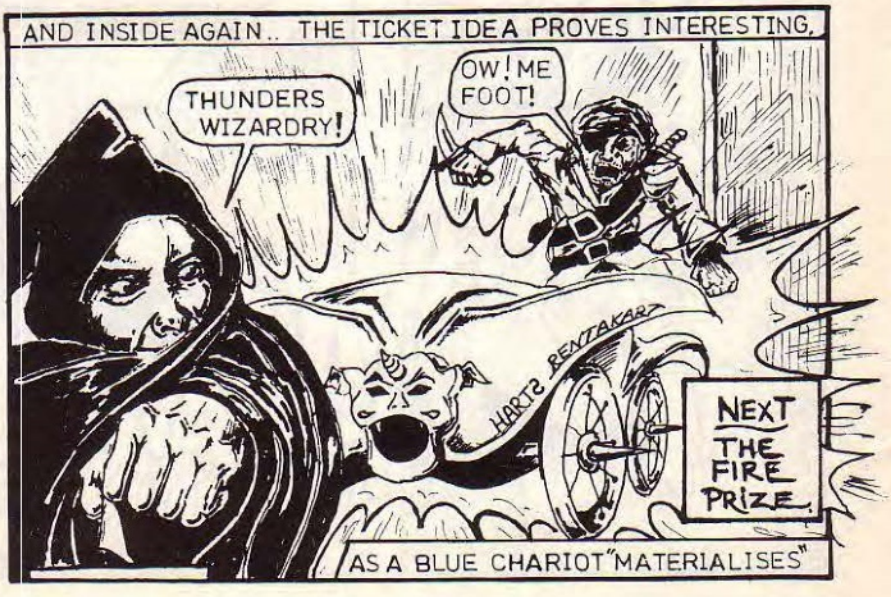

REG GRABS A TORCH.
HURRY!
BUT WHERE'S..
..NIGHTSWIFT?
CHARIOT DEPOT
WHAT WAS THAT?
A HORN
QUICK GET IN.. I HEAR FOOTSTEPS TO THE NORTH

KRELLFIRE! ORCS.
AHA! INTRUDERS. WE'VE FOUND 'EM LADS.
OH NO!
WALLOP! LETS HAVE SOME FUN.

DEXYS AND NIGHTSWIFT CLOSE THE DOOR AS THE ORCS START TOWARDS THEM. THE SIGN ON THE DOOR..
ER! NIGHTSWIFT. HATE TO BREAK YOUR CONCENTRATION, BUT YOU WOULDN'T MIND FIREBALLING THEM WOULD YOU?
HUM?
WHAT DO YOU THINK I AM, 5TH LEVEL OR SOMETHING.
CHARIOT TICKETS PLEASE TAKE ONE
..READ CHARIOT DEPOT

CHARIOT DEPOT? THINKS NIGHTSWIFT "TICKETS" HE MUSES.
NIGHTSWIFT?
"TAKE ONE" HE DECIDES

MEANWHILE OUTSIDE.
LOOK, HERES THE PLAN. I SAY "LETS BREAK THE DOOR DOWN" THEN HE SAYS "NO NEED, HERE COMES THE DRAGON."
THEN YOU RUN IN MAKING DRAGON NOISES.. ..CLEVER LIKE.


AND INSIDE AGAIN.. THE TICKET IDEA PROVES INTERESTING.
THUNDERS WIZARDRY!
OW! ME FOOT!
HARTZ RENTAKART
NEXT THE FIRE PRIZE.
AS A BLUE CHARIOT "MATERIALISES"

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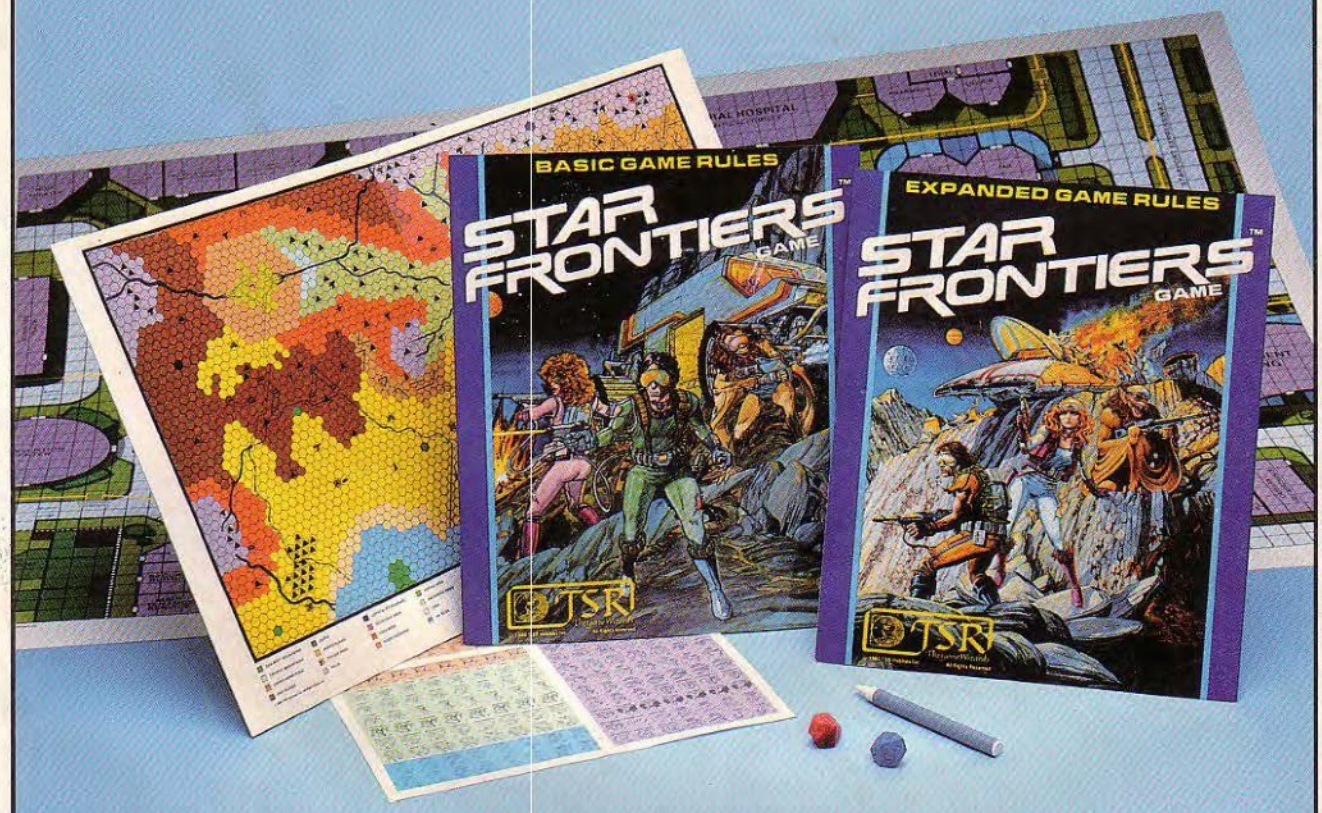

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